United Nations

Committee for Programme and Coordination

Report on the work of the thirty-ninth session (7 June to 2 July 1999)

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Note

Symbols of United Nations documents are composed of capital letters combined with figures. Mention of such a symbol indicates a reference to a United Nations document.

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Abbreviations

ACC	Administrative Committee on Coordination
ASEAN	Association of South-East Asian Nations
ECA	Economic Commission for Africa
ECE	Economic Commission for Europe
ECLAC	Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean
ESCAP	Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific
ESCWA	Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia
HIV/AIDS	Human immunodeficiency virus/acquired immunodeficiency syndrome
IAEA	International Atomic Energy Agency
ICRC	International Committee of the Red Cross
ITC	International Trade Centre UNCTAD/WTO
NGOs	Non-governmental organizations
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
OAU	Organization of African Unity
OAS	Organization of American States
UNCTAD	United Nations Conference on Trade and Development
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNHCR	Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNIDIR	United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research
UNRWA	United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East
UNISPACE III	Third United Nations Conference on Exploration and Peaceful Uses of Outer Space
WHO	World Health Organization

Chapter I

Organization of the session

1. The Committee for Programme and Coordination held its organizational session (1st meeting) at United Nations Headquarters on 7 May 1999 and its substantive session from 7 June to 2 July 1999. It held a total of 37 meetings and a number of informal consultations.

A. Agenda

2. The agenda for the thirty-ninth session, adopted by the Committee at its 1st meeting, is reproduced in annex I below.

3. In adopting the agenda, the Committee, in accordance with the decision taken at its organizational session, decided to consider at its thirty-ninth session the report of the Joint Inspection Unit entitled "More coherence for enhanced oversight in the United Nations system" (A/53/171), as well as the comments by the Administrative Committee on Coordination thereon (A/53/171/Add.1) and the observations made by the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (A/53/670).

B. Election of officers

4. At its 1st, 2nd and 3rd meetings, on 7 May and 7 and 8 June 1999, the Committee elected the following officers by acclamation.

Chairman:

Mr. Michel Tommo Monthe (Cameroon)

Vice-Chairmen:

Srta. Valeria Maria Gonzalez Posse (Argentina)
Mrs. Renata Archini de Giovanni (Italy)
Mr. Valeriu Tudor (Romania)

Rapporteur:

Mr. Juichi Takahara (Japan)

C. Attendance

5. The following States members of the Committee were represented:

Argentina
Austria
Bahamas
Benin
Brazil
Cameroon
China
Comoros
Egypt
France
Germany
Indonesia
Iran (Islamic Republic of)
Italy
Japan
Mexico
Nicaragua
Nigeria

Pakistan
Poland
Portugal
Republic of Korea
Romania
Russian Federation
Thailand
Trinidad and Tobago
Uganda
Ukraine
United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland
United States of America
Uruguay
Zambia
Zimbabwe

6. The Republic of the Congo was not represented at the thirty-ninth session of the Committee.

7. The following States Members of the United Nations were represented by observers:

Azerbaijan
Algeria
Armenia
Australia
Bangladesh
Belarus
Botswana
Chile
Colombia
Costa Rica
Côte d'Ivoire
Croatia
Cuba
Ecuador
Eritrea
Finland
Ghana
Guatemala
Guyana
India
Israel
Jamaica
Kazakhstan
Kenya
Lao People's Democratic Republic
Malaysia
Morocco
New Zealand
Norway
Panama
Philippines
Saint Lucia
San Marino
Saudi Arabia
Singapore
Syrian Arab Republic
Tunisia
United Republic of Tanzania

8. The following regional commissions and specialized agencies were represented:

Economic Commission for Africa (ECA)
Economic Commission for Europe (ECE)
Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC)
Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP)
Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA)
Regional Commissions New York Office
Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO)
United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)

9. Also present at the session were the Under-Secretary-General for Management, the Under-Secretary-General for Internal Oversight Services, the Legal Counsel, the Under-Secretary-General for Disarmament Affairs, the Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs, the Under-Secretary-General for General Assembly Affairs and Conference Services, the Controller and senior officials of the United Nations Secretariat. At the invitation of the Committee, Mr. John Fox, Inspector of the Joint Inspection Unit, also participated in the work of the Committee.

D. Documentation

10. The list of documents before the Committee at its thirty-ninth session is set out in annex II.

E. Adoption of the report of the Committee

11. At its 37th meeting, on 2 July 1999, the Committee adopted the draft report on the work of its thirty-ninth session (E/AC.51/1999/L.6 and Add.1–45).

Chapter II

Review of the efficiency of the administrative and financial functioning of the United Nations

12. At its 2nd meeting, on 7 June 1999, the Committee considered a note by the Secretary-General on the review of the efficiency of the administrative and financial functioning of the United Nations (A/54/67).

Discussion

13. Views were expressed that the consideration of this agenda item was an important one and deep concerns about its proposed elimination were communicated. It was recalled that the last report submitted by the Secretary-General on this item, in response to General Assembly resolution 41/213 of 19 December 1986, was issued as document A/45/226. It was noted that the only item under the review of the efficiency of the administrative and financial functioning of the United Nations was procurement reform, and that other issues that related to reform, such as the development account, results-based budgeting and the revolving credit fund, were under agenda item 113, Programme budget for the biennium 1998–1999. While recognizing the need to eliminate duplication of work, concern was expressed about the potential negative impact of the elimination of the agenda item and the report.

14. A view was expressed that the report could be discontinued but the agenda item maintained. An oral report to the Committee was considered an alternative. A question was raised about the legal basis for the consideration of the item if the report of the Secretary-General was discontinued. It was also stressed that it was necessary for the Member States to be kept informed of progress on the reform of the Organization. The view was expressed that the Committee should receive a report in writing, which should be a progress report on achievement in the reform process and be analytical in nature.

Conclusion and recommendations

15. The Committee recommends:

(a) That the agenda item entitled "Review of the efficiency of the administrative and financial functioning of the United Nations" be retained on the agenda of the General Assembly;

(b) That a progress report on the review of the efficiency of the administrative and financial functioning of the United Nations be submitted biennially to the General Assembly through the appropriate intergovernmental bodies.

Chapter III

Programme questions

A. Programme planning

1. Programme performance of the United Nations for the biennium 1996–1997

(a) Report of the Secretary-General on ways in which the full implementation and the quality of mandated programmes and activities could be ensured and could be better assessed by and reported to Member States

16. At its 14th meeting on 15 June 1999, the Committee considered the report of the Secretary-General on ways in which the full implementation and the quality of mandated programmes and activities could be ensured and better assessed by and reported to Member States (A/54/117).

17. The representative of the Secretary-General introduced the report and responded to questions raised during the Committee's consideration of the report.

Discussion

18. The view was expressed that the report was written in a vacuum, as if no rules and regulations existed in the Organization and that the recommendations and conclusions were not in conformity with the existing regulations and rules and established procedures. It was also expressed that the report was an attempt to invent something totally new and create the impression that results-based budgeting and time-limited initiatives were a panacea to the request in General Assembly resolution 53/207 of 18 December 1998.

19. The view was expressed that the report overemphasized concepts like results-based budgeting and time-limited initiatives, which are still under consideration by the General Assembly. The report should not have made an attempt to influence or prejudge the outcome of General Assembly deliberation on such politically controversial and complex issues.

20. Concern was expressed that the report did not make a single recommendation and completely ignored the request by the General Assembly in resolution 53/207 regarding ways to ensure full implementation of all mandated programmes. In this regard, the view was also expressed that the report should have given consideration to:

(a) The question of resources;

(b) Accountability and responsibility of programme managers for better programme delivery;

(c) Incentives and disincentives for programme managers;

(d) Measures to deal effectively with under performance;

(e) Improvement in the internal guidelines for evaluation.

21. The view was expressed that the report should be rewritten to fully take into account the request by the General Assembly in resolution 53/207 and to bring it in conformity with the regulations and rules.

22. The view was expressed that the report was prepared in response to concerns raised during the discussion of the Committee for Programme and Coordination at its thirty-eighth session on the need to place more emphasis on qualitative analysis in future performance reports to reflect achievements in implementing programme activities.

23. Concern was expressed on the direct linkage established in the report between the medium-term plan and the budget and efficiency in monitoring programmes. Because of the political nature of the United Nations and the complexity and diversity of activities carried out by the Organization, assessment of the quality of programmes could not be strictly related to the achievement of outputs in the context of the budget.

24. Although concerns were expressed that the report was highly theoretical, there were also views that it served as a useful catalyst in enabling Member States to move forward in the debate to seek ways to better assess the quality of implemented programmes.

25. The view was expressed that the options proposed in the report merited discussion and consideration. The view was expressed that option one was desirable but needed to be studied more carefully because it might pose a problem in scheduling the review process. The view was also expressed that the recommendation in paragraph 37 was not practicable because it would further delay the consideration of reports, as intergovernmental bodies may be meeting at different times. As a result, the evaluation would never come to an end. Option two would have contributed to enhancing accountability of programme delivery, but might unduly complicate the work of the Committee for Programme and Coordination. The view was also expressed that paragraph 38 was an attempt to introduce results-based budgeting. The programme performance report should not be considered with budget proposals. The proposals on the budget should reflect resources for full implementation of all mandated programmes and activities. The view was expressed that option three more directly addressed the problem of assessing the full implementation and quality of mandated programmes and activities. Furthermore, option three offered better prospects for meeting the objectives of the framework of the revised Regulations and Rules Governing Programme Planning, the Programme Aspects of the Budget, the Monitoring of Implementation and the Methods of Evaluation, which call for the identification of expected accomplishments in programme budget proposals. It was pointed out that the increase in detail in the programme budget, as called for by this option, would be an added advantage, as it would assist Member States in assessing the extent to which programmes had attained objectives. There was concern that the third proposal was related to proposals by the Secretariat on results-based budgeting, which had not yet been approved by the General Assembly.

26. Concern was expressed about the difficulty of applying the proposed concepts in the United Nations, especially the difficulty of relating outputs and intended outcomes. The quality of an output should not only be judged in terms of achieving outcomes or objectives. It was stressed that the Secretariat should be more vigilant in implementing self-evaluations, including the determination of the quality of implemented outputs by end-users. It was also pointed out that the quality of planning in the medium-term plan should not be used as an excuse for the lack of qualitative assessment measures. In this connection, it was stressed that it was incumbent upon the Secretariat to indicate what it could accomplish within a given biennial period in the delivery of outputs.

27. The view was expressed that the discussions should not ignore the uniqueness of the United Nations as an international organization that is characterized by multi-cultural and geopolitical differences. The view was expressed that proposals to improve the qualitative assessment of implemented outputs should take into consideration the current Regulations Governing Programme Planning, the Programme Aspects of the Budget, the Monitoring of Implementation and the Methods of Evaluation and the fact that the United Nations is neither a Government nor a private organization. However, despite the uniqueness of the United Nations, the Secretariat should be open to various management practices and approaches to enable it to learn from the experiences of other organizations. Views were expressed that meanwhile study should continue to determine a set of norms for self-evaluation and evaluation of programmes and specific outputs. In view of the importance

of seeking ways to better assess implemented outputs, the Committee emphasized that it was essential to focus on the merits of the proposals made in the report, bearing in mind that the long-term goal of the Organization should be to ensure that its implemented outputs add value.

28. The Committee acknowledged that the subject of the report was of a complex nature and therefore a prudent approach, in further consideration of the three options, was called for.

29. The view was expressed that a prototype of the proposed options should be provided by the Secretariat and that the subject should further stimulate dialogue within the Administrative Committee on Coordination on quality norms and standards.

Conclusions and recommendations

30. The Committee recommended that the Secretary-General be requested to further explore ways in which the full implementation of mandates could be ensured and better assessed according to the request in resolution 53/207, taking into account the Regulations and Rules Governing Programme Planning, the Programme Aspects of the Budget, the Monitoring of Implementation and the Methods of Evaluation, and budgetary procedures, and giving due consideration to the views of Member States, and report thereon to the Committee at its fortieth session.

(b) Note by the Secretary-General on the programme performance of the United Nations for the biennium 1996–1997

31. At its 15th meeting, on 15 June 1999, the Committee for Programme and Coordination considered the note by the Secretary-General on the programme performance of the United Nations for the biennium 1996–1997 (E/AC.51/1999/7).

32. The representative of the Secretary-General introduced the note and responded to questions raised during its consideration.

Discussion

33. The Committee noted the additional information provided at its request, on the status of 57 outputs carried over from the biennium 1994–1995 and further postponed during the biennium 1996–1997. In the absence of further justification warranting their continuation, those outputs had been recommended for termination in the report of the Secretary-General on the programme performance of the United Nations for the biennium 1996–1997 (A/53/122, para. 22).

34. The departments concerned had communicated that 14 outputs had been implemented in 1997–1998, 12 would be implemented in 1999, 2 outputs had been further postponed to 2000 and 20 outputs were considered ongoing in accordance with legislative mandates. Nine outputs were recommended for termination and explanations were provided. The Secretariat promised to change the system of revision for termination.

35. Concern was expressed at the lack of resources during the biennium to implement the recommendations based on the study of the effect of racial discrimination in education of minority children, taking into account that it was a mandated activity that had been carried over for the last two bienniums.

36. In this context, concern was also expressed about the proposal to eliminate these activities, taking into account the fact that the General Assembly had decided to celebrate in the year 2001 the World Conference against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia

and Related Intolerance, and that this activity would form part of the preparation for the Conference. It was pointed out also that the relevant intergovernmental body should give its opinion on this proposal.

37. Concern was expressed that a lack of resources had led to the termination or the repeated postponement of outputs. The view was expressed that programmes should not be sacrificed for savings. Concern was also expressed that the views of intergovernmental bodies on the nine remaining outputs proposed for termination were not sufficiently clear. The Secretariat was requested to furnish the additional information.

38. The view was expressed that intergovernmental bodies should consider each proposal and report thereon to the General Assembly before taking action.

39. The view was expressed with regret that the resources requested by the Secretariat were not commensurate with the full implementation of mandates, as required in many General Assembly resolutions, and in this regard, the Secretariat was requested to comply fully with such resolutions.

Conclusions and recommendations

40. The Committee regretted that the opinion of relevant intergovernmental bodies on the proposal by the Secretary-General to delete some outputs, as requested by the General Assembly in resolution 53/207 of 18 December 1998, had not been submitted.

41. The Committee noted the information provided. Recalling regulation 5.6 of the Regulations and Rules Governing Programme Planning, the Programme Aspects of the Budget, the Monitoring of Implementation and the Methods of Evaluation, it stressed the need for clear justification for termination of outputs.

42. The Committee noted with concern that, as indicated in the report, certain outputs had been postponed and others terminated owing to a lack of resources during the biennium.

43. The Committee noted the information provided and requested the Secretariat to ensure that future programme performance reports would provide clear justification and criteria for termination.

2. Regulations and Rules Governing Programme Planning, the Programme Aspects of the Budget, the Monitoring of Implementation and the Methods of Evaluation

44. At its 36th and 37th meetings, on 25 June 1999, the Committee for Programme and Coordination considered the report of the Secretary-General on the revisions to the Regulations and Rules Governing Programme Planning, the Programme Aspects of the Budget, the Monitoring of Implementation and the Methods of Evaluation (A/54/125).

45. The representative of the Secretary-General introduced the report and responded to queries raised during the Committee's consideration of the document.

Discussion

46. The Committee recalled that the General Assembly had, in section III of its resolution 53/207 of 18 December 1998, adopted the revised Regulations and had requested the Secretary-General to take the necessary action to prepare revisions to the relevant rules and to bring them to the attention of the General Assembly through the Committee before promulgation. It was observed that the promulgation of rules was the prerogative of the Secretary-General as chief administrative officer of the Organization.

Conclusions and recommendations

47. The Committee recommended that the rules the Secretary-General intended to promulgate, as proposed in document A/54/125, should be amended along the following lines:

(a) *Regulation 1.1.* The last sentence of rule 101.1 (a) should read "The Office of Programme Planning, Budget and Accounts, on behalf of the Secretary-General, shall be responsible for the oversight of the application of these rules.";

(b) *Regulation 3.2.* The new rule concerning the budget outline should more appropriately follow regulation 3.2.A.1 (d);

(c) *Regulation 4.2.* Rule 104.2 (a). The current paragraph should be retained;

(d) *Regulation 4.5.*

(i) Rule 104.6 (c) should be divided into two rules, the first ending with the words "programme budgets for the biennium." The second rule should begin with the words "The subprogramme structure shall correspond, to the extent possible, to an organizational unit ...";

(ii) Rule 104.6 (d) (i). The original paragraph should be retained, with the deletion of the word "major" in the first and last lines;

(e) *Regulation 4.8.*

(i) Rule 104.12 (b). The words "regulation 4.9" should be changed to read "regulations 4.8 and 4.9";

(ii) Rule 104.12 (e). The words "Steering Committee on Reform and Management" should be replaced by "Office of Programme Planning, Budget and Accounts";

(f) *Regulation 4.11.*

(i) Rule 104.3 (b). The current paragraph should be retained;

(ii) Rule 104.3 (c). The current paragraph should be retained;

(iii) Rule 104.3 (d) should read as follows:

> **"The strategy for the subprogrammes shall describe the course of action, the type of activities (research, technical assistance, support of negotiations, etc.), and the programme framework within which the budget will be prepared, which can be expected to result in the fulfilment of the objectives set.";**

(g) *Regulation 4.13.*

(i) Rule 104.11 (a) (i). At the end of the sentence, the words "and any other revisions which should be properly identified" should be inserted;

(ii) Rule 104.11 (a) (iii) should be deleted;

(iii) Rule 104.11 (c) should be retained;

(h) *Regulation 4.16.* Rule 104.18 (a). After the words "in accordance with" the words "regulations 3.2 and 5.1 through 5.9" should be inserted;

(i) *Regulation 5.3.* Rule 105.3. References to the Committee for Programme and Coordination, the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions and the General Assembly should be retained;

(j) *Regulation 5.4.* Rule 105.4.1 (c). At the end of paragraph (i), the words "and inclusion of reports thereto" should be added and paragraph (vii) should be deleted;

(k) *Regulation 5.6.* Rules 105.6 (a) (i), (ii), (iii) and (iv). After the word "outputs", the words "and activities" should be added;

(l) *Regulation 5.7.*

(i) Rule 105.7 (b). The words "Steering Committee on Reform and Management" should be replaced by "Office of Programme Planning, Budget and Accounts";

(ii) Rule 105.7 (c). The paragraph should be retained and the words "programme elements" should be replaced with the words "activities";

(m) *Regulation 5.9.* Rule 105.9 (a). After the word "outputs", the words "and activities" should be added;

(n) *Regulation 6.1.*

(i) Rule 106.1 (a). Before the word "shall" the words "in consultation with the Office of Programme Planning, Budget and Accounts" should be inserted;

(ii) Rule 106.1 (a) (ii). After the words "determine the actual" the words "progress made towards achieving expected accomplishments through the" should be inserted;

(iii) Rule 106.1 (b) (ii). After "The Central Monitoring and Inspection Unit" the words "in consultation with the Office of Programme Planning, Budget and Accounts" should be inserted;

(iv) Rule 106.1 (e). A new paragraph (e) reading "in the programme performance report, the assessment required under rule 106.1 (a) (ii) shall be indicated against objectives and expected accomplishments, to the extent possible, in subprogrammes. Explanations shall be given for lack of progress" should be added;

(o) *Regulation 6.2.* Rule 106.2 (b). After the word "discretion" the words "with full justification" should be inserted;

(p) *Regulation 7.3.* Rule 107.3 (b). After the word "outputs", the word "activities" should be added.

48. The Secretary-General should bring to the attention of the General Assembly, along with the revised Rules, a rule which gives guidance to programme managers for better implementation of regulation 5.4.

3. Medium-term plan for the period 1998–2001

49. At its 14th and 15th meetings, on 15 June 1999, the Committee for Programme and Coordination considered the report of the Secretary-General on measures for sectoral, functional and regional bodies to review the proposed medium-term plan for the period 2002–2005 (A/54/89).

50. The representative of the Secretary-General introduced the report and responded to queries raised during the Committee's consideration of the report.

Discussion

51. It was observed that concrete and action-oriented proposals from the Secretary-General on recommendations of the General Assembly would have been appreciated.

52. Appreciation was expressed for the information contained in the report concerning the timetable for review of portions of the proposed medium-term plan for the period 2002–2005. The measures taken by the Secretariat in ensuring adequate intergovernmental review, taking into account the complexity of scheduling meetings, were duly recognized. In this connection, the Committee was informed that, subsequent to the preparation of the report of the Secretary-General, the United Nations Commission on International Trade Law had indicated that it would review subprogramme 5.5, Progressive harmonization and unification of the law of international trade, of programme 5, Legal affairs. It was noted that there was no special review for subprogrammes 1.1 to 1.4 of programme 1, Political affairs; subprogrammes 5.1 to 5.4 and 5.6 of programme 5, Legal affairs; subprogrammes 7.1 and 7.7 of programme 7, Economic and social affairs; programme 8, Africa: New Agenda for Development; and programme 20, Humanitarian assistance. Review of those programmes and subprogrammes had, up to now, been undertaken only by the Committee. The view was expressed that they should all be included in the programme of work of the Main Committees of the General Assembly.

53. The importance of adequate review by specialized intergovernmental bodies, including the Economic and Social Council and the Main Committees, was emphasized. In this connection, the importance and necessity of views expressed collectively cannot be overemphasized. Therefore, every effort should be made by the Secretariat to ensure that views of intergovernmental bodies as a whole are taken into account when preparing the proposed medium-term plan.

54. Concern was expressed about the inadequate attention given by the Main Committees of the General Assembly to the medium-term plan and its revisions. It was stressed that every effort should be made to ensure that the Fifth Committee received views of the Main Committees also prior to its consideration of the plan and its revisions.

Conclusions and recommendations

55. The Committee recommended that the specialized intergovernmental bodies, as well as the Economic and Social Council and the Main Committees of the General Assembly, should include, in their programme of work, an agenda item on programme planning for the review of the proposed medium-term plan and its revisions. The Committee also recommended that the Fifth Committee receive all relevant comments prior to its consideration of the proposed medium-term plan and its revisions.

56. The Committee recommended that it should receive, at its fortieth session, the reports of intergovernmental bodies that would have reviewed the Secretary-General's proposals related to the medium-term plan, whether or not their views had already been incorporated in the Secretary-General's submission to the Committee.

57. The Committee decided that, in the absence of a specialized intergovernmental body to conduct an in-depth review of the medium-term plan and its revisions of programme 8, Africa: New Agenda for Development, it should conduct such a review.

B. Proposed programme budget for the biennium 2000–2001

Part one. Foreword and introduction

58. At its 12th and 13th meetings, on 14 June 1989, the Committee considered the report of the Secretary-General on the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2000–2001, the second biennial programme budget within the medium-term plan for the period 1998–2001.

59. The representative of the Secretary-General introduced the foreword and introduction to the proposed programme budget (A/54/6 (Part one) (i)) and responded to queries raised during the Committee's consideration of the document.

60. The level of resources proposed by the Secretary-General, at $2,535.6 million at 1998–1999 rates, represented an increase over 1998–1999 levels of $5.7 million, or 0.2 per cent, as well as a net increase of 61 posts. It was also lower than the budget outline figure of $2,545 million decided upon by the General Assembly. It was explained to the Committee that this proposal for the biennium 2000–2001 built on gains in productivity and effectiveness achieved in 1998–1999 through the implementation of the structural reform initiated in 1997. It was also explained that the forthcoming biennium would allow a consolidation of those gains as tasks are undertaken with greater effectiveness while applying the benefits of past and ongoing investments in staff training and technology.

61. The Committee was informed that the proposed level of resources represented efforts to ensure the full, efficient and effective implementation of the objectives and mandates set by Member States. The Committee was further informed that any further cuts would seriously compromise the ability of the Organization to deliver the services that Member States expected.

62. The Committee was informed that the proposed programme budget was guided by two main considerations, the medium-term plan for the period 1998–2001, as revised by the General Assembly at its fifty-third session (A/53/6/Rev.1), and the programme budget outline for 2000–2001, as adopted by the General Assembly at its fifty-third session (see resolution 53/206 of 18 December 1998). The Committee was further informed that the distribution of resources in the proposed programme budget responded to the priority areas as determined by the General Assembly in its resolution 53/206. Consequently, for each of the priority areas, increases in expenditure had been included in the Secretary-General's proposals. The Committee was informed that the proposed growth in those areas was made possible as a result of administrative cost-limitation and reduction efforts in the common services areas, including both the Department of Management and the Department of General Assembly Affairs and Conference Services.

63. Increases were also proposed in the areas of internal oversight and capital expenditures. Other significant aspects of the budget proposals included a 10.1 per cent increase in resources for staff training, and requirements totalling $3.0 million for the final implementation phase of the Integrated Management Information System (IMIS). With regard to the Development Account, the Committee was informed that maintenance at the 1998–1999 level was being proposed pending a General Assembly decision on the operating arrangements for the Account.

64. The Committee considered the proposed programme budget in accordance with its mandate. In that connection, it focused on: (a) the adequacy of the link between the subprogrammes of the medium-term plan and the programmatic content of the proposed programme budget; (b) the assurance that all other activities that had been proposed for inclusion in the budget had been mandated by the legislative bodies; (c) a proposal to remove elements that were considered to be marginal, ineffective or in need of reformulation; and (d) the proper identification of expected accomplishments for the biennium.

Discussion

65. Satisfaction was expressed with the format and timeliness of the budget documents and with the efforts of the Secretary-General to formulate the expected accomplishments of individual programmes, but it was also regretted that this had not been done in all cases.

66. It was recalled that the General Assembly had stressed that more emphasis should be placed in future programme performance reports on qualitative analysis to reflect achievements in implementing programme activities. The view was expressed that the proposed programme narratives were a good first step towards providing a basis for this. Nevertheless, the view was also expressed that such qualitative analysis would require an assessment of the progress made towards achieving expected accomplishments and full implementation of mandates during the biennium. A disparity was observed in the specificity of expected accomplishments and in how progress towards them would be gauged. The view was expressed that while there were often difficulties involved and while for certain programmes assessment could not be precise, it was necessary to provide a basis for the qualitative analysis sought by the General Assembly. The view was expressed that the Secretariat should therefore continue to ensure that in future programme budgets objectives and expected accomplishments were as precise, specific and measurable as possible. It was noted that this was the first time that proposals regarding expected accomplishments were included in the budget. In this regard, the view was expressed that the General Assembly should evaluate the conformity of the expected accomplishments with the objectives established in programmes and subprogrammes. Moreover, the view was expressed that such an evaluation should also study the feasibility of formulating expected accomplishments for all programmes, given the nature of the activities carried out under those programmes, and should include proposals in that regard whenever appropriate.

67. It was recalled that the General Assembly had not taken any decision regarding the concept of results-based budgeting and, in that regard, concern was expressed that some initiatives had been taken by the Secretariat to include in the proposed programme budget some concepts and proposals on results-based budgeting.

68. The view was expressed that the efforts of the Secretary-General to address gender-mainstreaming issues should be commended. The view was also expressed that further implementation was required to achieve the goals in this area.

69. With regard to the overall level of resources, concern was expressed about whether the proposed programme budget would be sufficient for full implementation of the objectives and mandates of the Organization. Particular concern was expressed at the reduction in the interpretation and translation areas of conference services. Moreover, it was observed that a clear link between resources and priorities had not been established in every case. On the other hand, it was also observed that priority areas had indeed been appropriately reflected in the budget proposals. Regret was expressed that the overall level of resources was less than the budget outline. Concern was expressed regarding the impact any future reduction in resources could have. Concern was also expressed regarding the distribution of reductions between the various sections, and whether a number of sections had not been disproportionately affected. In particular, the concerns expressed related to section 2, General Assembly affairs and conference services; section 3, Political affairs; and section 4, Disarmament.

70. The view was expressed that the budget outline was an indicative planning figure that did not represent a ceiling or a floor for the level of the Secretary-General's proposed programme budget. The view was expressed that the Secretary-General's assurance that the proposed programme budget would enable the Secretariat to implement the objectives and mandates set by Member States in a comprehensive, efficient and effective way should be noted, although the view was also expressed that the Secretary-General had made such assurances before. Moreover, the view was expressed that the proposed programme budget had been formulated in accordance with priority areas set by the General Assembly.

Nevertheless, concern was also expressed that the distribution of resources among programmes did not fully reflect priorities approved by the General Assembly.

71. The view was expressed that every effort should be made to gain the approval of as many Member States as possible in formulating the programme budget, and that this must be a dynamic process that responds in a flexible manner to changes in the international community. The importance was underlined of reviewing the activities of the Organization with a view to prioritizing them better and directing more resources to the most necessary activities, thereby striving for maximum efficiency. In this regard, the view was expressed that the proposed programme budget could be further reduced by maximizing economies and absorbing additional budgetary requirements to the maximum extent without adversely affecting the role that the United Nations must play in the world.

72. It was emphasized that Member States should provide adequate resources for the full implementation of all mandated programmes and activities.

73. Concern was expressed about whether the funds proposed for IMIS represented the final implementation phase.

74. Questions were raised concerning the basis for a net increase of 61 posts in the context of the reform process. Concerns were expressed regarding the levels of new posts, and the "top-heaviness" in the middle and higher echelons of the staffing table that would result from their establishment. Questions were also raised regarding the level and fluctuations in the vacancy rates. It was felt that these questions needed to be fully addressed.

75. It was noted with concern that the proposed programme budget was significantly lower than the budget outline figure approved by the General Assembly in its resolution 53/206. In that regard, the difficulties faced during the adoption of the resolution were recalled, as well as the political sensitivity involved. The view was expressed that the reduction in the overall level of the budget in relation to the budget outline was not justified.

76. The view was expressed that, once the level of resources Member States would provide to the Organization had been agreed to, Member States had the obligation under Article 17 of the Charter to provide the financial resources in full, on time and without conditions, so that the Organization can carry out fully the mandates entrusted to it.

77. It was observed that, since the General Assembly's consideration of the Secretary-General's report on the modalities of the Development Account had not yet been completed, the Secretary-General was not in a position to include programmatic details of activities to be implemented under the Development Account in the current proposed programme budget. The view was expressed that the Secretary-General should have at least provided preliminary information relating to the initiatives in each budget section with regard to identifying gains and initiatives to improve productivity and enhance the quality of programme performance. After all, in the budget outline, the Secretary-General had indicated that economies in the order of $40 million would be identified. It was also reiterated that efficiency measures should not imply a reduction or ceilings for programme managers.

78. Concern was expressed about the inclusion of some recommendations of oversight bodies that had not yet been approved by the General Assembly. In this regard, the view was expressed that only those recommendations approved by the General Assembly should be included in the budget proposals.

Conclusions and recommendations

79. The Committee expressed its appreciation for the improved format and timely submission of the proposed programme budget in all official languages.

80. The Committee noted the Secretary-General's efforts to meet the new requirements of the revised Regulations and Rules Governing Programme Planning, the Programme Aspects of the Budget, the Monitoring of Implementation and the Methods of Evaluation.

81. The Committee noted with concern that not all sections of the proposed programme budget had been prepared on the basis of the standard format, in accordance with the Regulations and Rules Governing Programme Planning, the Programme Aspects of the Budget, the Monitoring of Implementation and the Methods of Evaluation, as well as with relevant resolutions adopted by the General Assembly, and recommended that all sections of future proposed programme budgets be presented in the same standard format, in accordance with the Regulations and Rules and relevant resolutions.

82. With respect to the general level of resources, the Committee noted that this was lower than indicated in the proposed budget outline.

83. The Committee noted a trend towards an increasing use of extrabudgetary funds for activities that should be funded under the regular budget.

84. The Committee stressed that all Member States should pay their assessed contributions in full, on time and without imposing conditions, to avoid the financial difficulties being experienced by the Organization.

85. Concern was expressed by the Committee regarding the structure of the staff pyramid, where an increase in the number of middle and higher echelon posts was detected, while the number of posts at the entry level was decreasing. Moreover, the Committee noted the real fluctuations in vacancy rates and stressed the need to specifically address this issue.

86. With regard to paragraph 43 of the foreword and introduction, the Committee emphasized that the efficiency measures should not affect the full implementation of all mandated programmes and activities. Moreover, such measures should be in accordance with General Assembly resolutions and the regulations and rules of the Organization.

87. The Committee recommended that the General Assembly adopt the foreword and introduction of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2000–2001, subject to the following modifications:

(a) In the first sentence of paragraph 64, the words "a sufficient" should be replaced with "the best";

(b) In the second sentence of paragraph 187, the phrase "evaluates the relevance, efficiency and effectiveness of the Organization's activities and" should be deleted.

Section 1. Overall policy-making, direction and coordination

88. At its 26th meeting, on 22 June 1999, the Committee for Programme and Coordination considered section 1, Overall policy-making, direction and coordination, of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2000–2001 (A/54/6 (Sect. 1)). The Controller introduced the section.

Discussion

89. The importance of strengthening the Office of the President of the General Assembly was reiterated. It was noted that the resources for the Office of the President were now

presented by objects of expenditure pursuant to General Assembly resolution 52/220 of 22 December 1997. It was noted that, pursuant to General Assembly resolution 53/214 of 18 December 1998, the President of the Assembly should have full authority to use the funds provided in the budget for the Office, including hospitality, travel and any other requirements for the accomplishment of the President's official responsibility. It was observed that expenses for hospitality would facilitate the functions of the President. Satisfaction was expressed with the transfer of the narrative concerning the Office of the President from section 2, General Assembly Affairs and Conference Services, to section 1 and their incorporation into the programme of work of the General Assembly.

90. Support was also given to the establishment of the Office of the Director-General in Nairobi and to bringing the financial arrangements of the United Nations Office at Nairobi into line with those of similar United Nations administrative offices, in accordance with General Assembly resolution 52/220. Regarding the new Office of the Director-General at Nairobi, it was felt that the functions of that Office should be at par with those of the Offices of the Directors-General at Geneva and Vienna.

91. Concern was expressed that a number of narratives in the section appeared to show duplication and overlapping, for example, regarding the functions of the Department of Public Information and those of the Office of External Relations and as regards activities related to the process of reform. It was pointed out that the narrative on mandates appeared to be vague. It was observed that certain activities deserved further justification in relation to mandates by legislative bodies, in particular the activities of Office of the Director-General in Geneva, related to the establishment of a network of a repository of expertise in support of good governance and sustainable economic and social development. It was noted that the narrative of the Office of the Director-General in Geneva reflected a change in approach. It was emphasized, therefore, that, in the formulation of activities for that Office, particular attention should be paid to the mandates entrusted to the Director-General. A proposal was made to delete the last sentence in paragraph 1.66, which read "To that end, the Office is exploring the establishment of such a network, which would gradually include relevant institutions elsewhere in Europe and lead to the creation of a repository of expertise in support of good governance and sustainable economic and social development".

92. In connection with the activities of the Secretary-General, the view was expressed that specific importance was attributed to his key role in efforts to secure the observance of human rights. The view was also expressed that the key role played by the Secretary-General related to a number of activities and that those activities should be accorded equal importance.

93. The view was expressed that expected accomplishments for the biennium needed to be further developed. The view was also expressed that programme managers needed to fully implement the Regulations and Rules Governing Programme Planning, the Programme Aspects of the Budget, the Monitoring of Implementation and the Methods of Evaluation regarding self-evaluation and the identification of activities that were inefficient, ineffective and irrelevant.

Conclusions and recommendations

94. The Committee recommended that the General Assembly approve the programme narrative of section 1, Overall policy-making, direction and coordination, subject to the following modifications:

(a) In paragraph 1.50, insert, after the second sentence reading "Included ... December 1997", a new sentence reading "The functions and responsibilities of the Deputy Secretary-General are in accordance with paragraph 1 of resolution 52/12 B";

(a) (*bis*) In the penultimate sentence of paragraph 1.50, replace the phrase "This organizational unit" with "The Executive Office of the Secretary-General", and move that sentence after the first sentence of the paragraph and before the sentence reading "Included in this ... 19 December 1997.";

(a) (*ter*) In the first sentence of paragraph 1.65, after the words "Economic and Social Council" and before "protocol and liaison functions", the words "responsibilities entrusted to the Director-General of the Conference on Disarmament" should be added;

(b) In the last sentence of paragraph 1.75, insert the word "core" before the words "functions can be stated as follows", and in subparagraph 1.75 (b), after the words "non-governmental organizations", insert the words "in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council".

Section 2. General Assembly affairs and conference services

95. At its 26th and 27th meetings, on 22 June 1999, the Committee for Programme and Coordination considered section 2, General Assembly affairs and conference services, of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2000–2001 (A/54/6 (Sect. 2)).

96. The budget section was introduced by the representative of the Secretary-General who responded to queries raised during the Committee's consideration of the budget section.

Discussion

97. Satisfaction was expressed with the accomplishments achieved after the restructuring of the Department of General Assembly Affairs and Conference Services at the end of 1997. The view was further expressed that the restructuring of the Department made the usage of conference services, facilities and resources more cost-effective.

98. The importance of the activities under General Assembly affairs and conference services was stressed. It was noted that the human resource levels had been stable in the face of increased workloads. It was also noted that while the workload was increasing, as reflected in the workload statistics presented, the overall level of resources has been significantly reduced. Concern was expressed that those factors would likely have a negative effect on the timeliness and quality of the conference services provided, which, as also noted, already required improvement. It was felt that an evaluation of the workload should be carried out in the rationalization of the level of resources.

99. The introduction of new technologies in the work of the Department was welcomed, but with the qualification that it should not compromise the quality of services. It was noted that remote translation and interpretation should be properly evaluated and tested to ensure that a high standard of quality and delivery was maintained. A view was expressed that remote interpretation should first be approved by the General Assembly before it was put to use and should be used only for special conferences. The view was expressed that more emphasis should be added to the narrative in the overview regarding the increasing activities of the Economic and Social Council and that mention of the maintenance of the Council Web site was missing from the list of outputs of subprogramme 3.

100. It was pointed out that there was inequitable treatment of conference services in the various duty stations. The view was expressed that conference services in Nairobi should be treated in the same manner as conference services in New York, Geneva and Vienna and that it should have been included in the budget section. Concern was also expressed over the levels of self-revision of translation. It was noted that an increase in the use of temporary assistance and ad hoc contractual services to provide translation would increase the need

for revision and that it could be difficult to meet that need with the current permanent staffing levels. The view was also expressed that greater reliance on outsourcing of translation services would require adjustment of the grade structure of staffing to provide for more revision work at the senior levels. It was also noted that the interpretation service in Vienna did not enjoy a full complement of permanent staff, resulting in greater reliance on the more expensive temporary assistance. Concern was expressed that the quality of translation and interpretation needed to be improved. Serious concern was expressed about the quality of translation of documentation in Spanish at Vienna.

101. On the subject of the cost-accounting system, the issue was raised as to the availability of in-house expertise in that area so that there would be no need to use external consultants for that project and, consequently, effect some savings for the Organization. With regard to the control and limitation of documentation, a question was raised as to whether the number of documents could be reduced.

102. It was observed that a number of mandates still had to be translated into activities in the programme of work. It was further observed that the description of activities in the budget fascicle did not clearly reflect what was to be achieved or accomplished.

103. It was noted that expected accomplishments had not been included in the budget section. It was further stated that it would have been feasible to include those accomplishments. It was also noted that it was difficult to identify expected accomplishments owing to the complexity and the nature of the work carried out under the budget section.

104. The view was expressed that programme managers needed to implement more fully the Regulations and Rules Governing Programme Planning, the Programme Aspects of the Budget, the Monitoring of Implementation and the Methods of Evaluation, which require self-evaluation and identification of activities that are inefficient, ineffective and irrelevant.

Conclusions and recommendations

105. The Committee endorsed the programme narrative of section 2, General Assembly affairs and conference services, and decided to recommend to the General Assembly that it be approved with the following modifications:

(a) New paragraph 2.35 *bis* should be added after paragraph 2.35 and the remaining paragraphs renumbered accordingly:

> **"2.35 *bis*. The Division will also conduct consultations and coordinate the assignment of responsibilities for the implementation of General Assembly and Economic and Social Council resolutions and decisions and follow up to ensure timely action by relevant bodies."**

(b) At the end of paragraph 2.36 (c) (i), the phrase "and consultations and coordination for the assignment of responsibilities for the implementation of General Assembly and Economic and Social Council resolutions" should be added;

(c) New paragraph 2.45 *bis* should be added after paragraph 2.45 and the remaining paragraphs renumbered accordingly:

> **"2.45 *bis*. Another objective will be to coordinate with relevant bodies to ensure compliance with General Assembly resolutions 52/214 B and 53/208 B regarding the format of reports."**

(d) In paragraph 2.46 (c) (ii), after the words "limitation of documentation;", the phrase, "compliance with resolution 53/208 B on format of reports;"should be added.

Section 3. Political affairs

106. At its 27th and 28th meetings, on 22 June 1999, the Committee for Programme and Coordination considered section 3, Political affairs, of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2000–2001.

107. The representative of the Secretary-General introduced the budget section and responded to queries raised during the Committee's consideration of the budget section.

Discussion

108. Support was given to the activities undertaken by the Department of Political Affairs of the United Nations Secretariat. The importance of the functions of the programme, namely the prevention, control and resolution of conflicts, including post-conflict peace-building, was reiterated. It was agreed that preventive diplomacy and peacemaking was the most cost-effective way by which the Organization could contribute to the maintenance of international peace and security. The view was expressed that efforts should be focused, therefore, on preventive diplomacy in accordance with Chapter VI of the Charter of the United Nations to avoid the escalating of conflicts to a level that would require the establishment of peacekeeping operations. Support was expressed for the work of the Electoral Assistance Division whose activities were undertaken at the specific request of Member States in their efforts to establish and strengthen electoral institutions and processes, incorporating the broader concept of good governance.

109. Concern was also expressed that one of the overall objectives of the programme, namely, the promotion of a comprehensive, just and lasting settlement of the question of Palestine in accordance with all relevant United Nations resolutions, as described in paragraph 1.1 of the medium-term plan for the period 1998–2001,[1] was not reflected in the overview of the budget section. The importance of accurate reflection of the medium-term plan was stressed.

110. Satisfaction was expressed with the inclusion of provisions for special political missions in the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2000–2001. It was noted that resources for such missions previously included in the budget section for peacekeeping operations were now reflected in section 3, and that such activities were the responsibility of the Department of Political Affairs, as consistent with the provisions of programme 1, Political affairs, of the medium-term plan.

111. The view was expressed with satisfaction that expected accomplishments were included. It was observed that further thought needed to be given to the measurement of a number of expected accomplishments. The view was also expressed that some activities of this section might not be measurable and, consequently, it would not be possible to determine the expected accomplishments. The view was expressed that the accomplishments should be specific enough to facilitate objective assessment at the end of the biennium. In this connection, the view was expressed that the Regulations and Rules Governing Programme Planning, the Programme Aspects of the Budget, the Monitoring of Implementation and the Methods of Evaluation should be implemented with respect to the requirement that activities should be systematically evaluated to determine their relevance, efficiency, effectiveness and impact in relation to their objectives. The efforts made to incorporate a gender perspective in the Department's data-collection, research and analysis activities were welcomed.

112. A view was expressed with concern on the use of extrabudgetary resources to finance some activities that should be funded from the regular budget.

113. A view was expressed with concern on the relationship between the Department of Political Affairs and some human rights organizations.

Conclusions and recommendations

114. The Committee recommended that the General Assembly approve the programme narrative of section 3, Political affairs, of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2000–2001, subject to the following modifications:

(a) After the first sentence of paragraph 3.2, insert the following sentence: "A case in point is the promotion of a comprehensive, just and lasting settlement of the question of Palestine in accordance with all relevant United Nations resolutions";

(b) In subparagraph 3.37 (c) (i), *replace* Participation in the activities of *with* Maintain contacts for exchanges of information with.

Section 4. Disarmament

115. At its 28th meeting, on 22 June 1999, the Committee for Programme and Coordination considered section 4, Disarmament, of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2000–2001.

116. The representative of the Secretary-General introduced the budget section and responded to queries raised during the Committee's consideration of the document.

Discussion

117. Support was expressed for the newly re-established Department for Disarmament Affairs, and for its reorganization to respond more effectively to its mandates. Note was taken of the general orientation of the programme of work. However, views were expressed that the narrative part of the section on disarmament did not accurately reflect the narrative of the programme budget for 1998–1999, adopted by the General Assembly in its resolution 52/220 of 22 December 1997. Furthermore, in some instances, the narrative was not in full compliance with the mandates contained in the medium-term plan for the period 1998–2001, as approved by the General Assembly in its resolution 53/207 of 18 December 1998. Also, in one view, full support was expressed for the narrative part of the proposed budget section on disarmament. The view was expressed that the proposed slight increase of resources was not commensurate with the important task of this Department.

118. The view was expressed that the overview, programme of work and expected accomplishments sections did not fully comply with the mandate contained in the medium-term plan, as approved by the General Assembly in its resolution 53/207, and that the Secretariat should comply with the approved mandates to facilitate the work of intergovernmental and expert bodies.

119. The view was expressed that the reference to exchange of information in paragraph 4.3 was also not in conformity with provisions of the medium-term plan. The Department is mandated to provide information on United Nations activities in disarmament, not the exchange of information.

120. It was observed that the thrust of paragraph 4.13 was to assume a new role for the Department in creating new legal and political norms and a central role in the field of disarmament. Whereas this is the prerogative of the relevant intergovernmental bodies, the adherence to disarmament treaties was the sovereign right and prerogative of Member States, and the Secretariat had no role to perform in that regard. However, support was expressed for the role of the Secretariat in the promotion of adherence to disarmament treaties.

121. Clarification was requested concerning the mandate of the activity proposed in paragraph 4.17 (c) (ii).

122. Views were expressed that the programme of work showed a certain imbalance; activities such as those related to biological and bacteriological weapons were overemphasized, while work in the field of nuclear weapons was not given the level of importance that it deserved. Appreciation was expressed for the importance given to the work in the area of conventional arms.

123. Support was given for the revitalization of the regional centres in Africa, Asia and Latin America and appreciation was expressed for the efforts made by the Department to pursue regional solutions to regional problems. However, it was emphasized that efforts should be intensified to ensure the cost-effectiveness of the centres and to seek adequate levels of extrabudgetary resources to fund their operation.

124. It was observed that paragraph 4.17 (d) (ii) distorted the mandate in the medium-term plan, as the medium-term plan did not give the regional centres any mandate to promote wider adherence to the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms.

125. It was pointed out that a number of recent developments might have a negative impact on the question of disarmament. Such developments included issues related to the development of missile defence systems and conventional weapons, the strengthening of military alliances and the militarization of outer space. Views were expressed that the work on disarmament should also address such issues.

126. The view was expressed that the mandate for the role of Department for Disarmament Affairs in illegitimate use of small arms needed clarification. How would the Department for Disarmament Affairs determine what was legitimate and what was illegitimate?

127. It was noted that the entire fascicle seemed to be obsessed with weapons of mass destruction. Such weapons include chemical weapons, biological weapons and nuclear weapons. The Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons deals with the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on Their Destruction comprehensively and the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxin Weapons and on Their Destruction deals with biological weapons, negotiations for the strengthening of which are under way in Geneva. There has been no progress in the area of nuclear disarmament. Given this backdrop, the role of the Department for Disarmament Affairs in the area of weapons of mass destruction was questioned.

128. The view was expressed that the branches established by the Department for Disarmament Affairs were not in conformity with the decision of the General Assembly in section III, paragraph 28 of its resolution 52/220, and the need for full compliance with Assembly resolutions and decisions was emphasized.

129. The inclusion of the paragraph on expected accomplishments for the biennium was welcomed, but views were expressed that further refinement was needed. In particular, it was questioned if some of the expected accomplishments, as formulated and proposed, could be effectively measured.

130. The role of the Conference on Disarmament in Geneva and its subsidiary bodies, as the single multilateral negotiating forum of the international community in the field of disarmament was emphasized. In this context, the view was expressed that the role of the Department for Disarmament Affairs should not result in a duplication of activities of the Conference on Disarmament.

131. The following modifications to the programme narrative of section 4 were proposed:

(a) Reference to activities related to the Disarmament Commission should be included;

(b) In the third sentence of paragraph 4.2, the words "the existence and" should be inserted before "the spread of weapons of mass destruction.";

(c) In paragraph 4.2, the third sentence should read:

"Following the end of cold war, the United Nations has been called upon to take up new challenges and tasks as a result of the growing threat from the existence of large stockpiles of nuclear weapons, proposals for ballistic missile defences and the weaponization of outer space, the lack of progress in the field of disarmament, the spread of weapons of mass destruction and the development and use of advanced and sophisticated conventional arms";

(d) The last sentence of paragraph 4.2 should be deleted;

(e) In paragraph 4.3, the second sentence should be replaced with:

"It will address issues of negative developments in the international situation in the field of disarmament, in particular the expansion and strengthening of military alliances and the prospect of the weaponization of outer space. It will also address issues of development of missile defence systems and conventional disarmament, including sophisticated conventional weapons, small arms, light weapons and landmines, as well as practical disarmament measures.";

(f) In the first line of paragraph 4.3, the words "creating and" should be inserted before "promoting";

(g) At the end of the second sentence of paragraph 4.3, the words "in the post-conflict situation" should be added;

(h) Paragraph 4.3 should be redrafted as follows:

"In the coming biennium, the Department will continue to focus on nuclear disarmament. It will address the issues of the weaponization of outer space, the development of missile defences, conventional disarmament, including small arms, light weapons, landmines, advanced sophisticated weapons, as well as all practical disarmament measures in post-conflict situations. It will expand its outreach activities, including its databases, to ensure the provision of impartial, factual information on the disarmament efforts of the United Nations to Member States, parliamentarians, research and academic institutions, and specialized non-governmental organizations.";

(i) In paragraph 4.4, the reference to the Security Council should be deleted;

(j) In the first sentence of paragraph 4.5, after the words "weapons of mass destruction", the words "particularly nuclear weapons" should be added;

(k) In paragraph 4.5, line 2, after the phrase "derived from the General Assembly in the areas of", the phrase "weapons of mass destruction and conventional arms" should be replaced by the words "disarmament and arms limitation, especially with regard to nuclear disarmament";

(l) In paragraph 4.11, all the text after the first sentence (ending with "and other militarily significant States") should be replaced by the following:

"In 1998, it decided to establish an ad hoc committee to negotiate with a view to reaching agreement on effective international arrangements to assure non-nuclear-weapon States against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons, as well as an ad hoc committee to negotiate, on the basis of the report of the Special Coordinator and the mandate contained therein, a non-discriminatory, multilateral and internationally and effectively verifiable treaty banning the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices. It also recommended that they be re-established at the beginning of 1999. The Conference is currently engaged in a comprehensive review of its agenda in order to make it conform to the new international political and security environment. It is also exploring ways and means of addressing the issue of nuclear disarmament. The Conference is expected to discuss a ban on the transfer of anti-personnel landmines to complement the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons. It is also expected to continue its efforts in the promotion of transparency in armaments and the prevention of an arms race in outer space.";

(m) In paragraph 4.11, the following changes should be made:

(i) The second sentence should read:

> "In 1998, the Conference on Disarmament decided to establish two ad hoc committees to start negotiations on a fissile material cut-off treaty and on effective international arrangements to assure non-nuclear-weapon States against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons";

(ii) The third and fourth sentences of the same paragraph should read:

> "The Conference is currently engaged in a comprehensive review of its agenda in order to make it conform to the new international political and security environment, so it is exploring ways and means of addressing the issue of nuclear weapons";

(iii) In the fifth sentence of the paragraph, the words "transfer of" before the words "anti-personnel landmines" should be deleted; and the words "to complement the recently concluded Ottawa Convention" should be deleted after the words "anti-personnel landmines";

(n) Paragraph 4.13 should be redrafted to read:

"During the biennium 2000–2001, the following objectives will be pursued: to provide organizational and substantive secretariat support at Geneva and substantive secretariat support at Headquarters to multilateral bodies entrusted with deliberation and/or negotiations on disarmament issues; to promote expertise in the field of arms limitation and disarmament in more Member States, particularly in the developing countries, and to foster a better understanding of the particular concerns of Member States in the field of international security and disarmament; to assist Member States and States parties in effectively implementing multilateral disarmament agreements; to monitor and analyse developments and trends with regard to weapons of mass destruction in all their aspects, including the questions relating to the weaponization of outer space and ballistic missile defence, and to develop a database accessible to all Member States, with a view to assisting the Secretary-General and Member States in identifying areas for which solutions and approaches are to be formulated; to assist Member States in developing and implementing projects of practical disarmament and to project the United Nations central role in curbing excessive small arms proliferation and illicit arms traffic; to monitor developments and trends with a view to strengthening the advisory capacity of the Department, including that of the Secretary-General's Advisory Board on Disarmament Matters, to strengthen the outreach programme and to promote the exchange of ideas between the United Nations and academic and research institutes; to facilitate the reporting of States parties to the Ottawa Convention with respect to article 7 (transparency measures) and the implementation of article 8 (facilitation and clarification of compliance); to coordinate disarmament activities and initiatives at the regional and subregional levels; and to provide impartial, factual information on disarmament matters to the Member States.";

(o) In paragraph 4.13, line 12, the word "greater" should be deleted before the word "transparency"; and the words "facilitation of" should be inserted before the words "wider participation";

(p) In paragraph 4.13:

(i) In the fourth objective (line 7), the words "fully and" should be added before the word "effectively", and (lines 8–9), the words "in particular nuclear disarmament" should be added after the words "in the field of weapons of mass destruction";

(ii) At the end of the fifth objective (line 12), after the word "formulated", the words "to promote and facilitate the exchange of information, equipment and technology for peaceful purposes among members of existing multilateral disarmament and non-proliferation treaties" should be added;

(iii) In the sixth objective (line 12), the words "transparency in the field of conventional arms through" should be replaced by the words "transparency in armament through the expansion of the register to mass destruction weapons and small arms";

(q) In the third sentence of paragraph 4.15, the phrase "fought mostly with small arms" should be deleted;

(r) In paragraph 4.16, lines 7 and 8 should read:

"of Member States of new trends and developments on specific issues in the field of weapons of mass destruction as well as missile defence systems; facilitation of participation in the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms and the";

(s) In paragraph 4.16, line 10, the phrase "advanced and sophisticated conventional weapons," should be inserted after the words "illegitimate use of";

(t) In paragraph 4.16:

(i) In line 3, after the words "disarmament agreements", the words "promoting the full and effective implementation of all existing multilateral disarmament treaties and fostering their universality" should be added;

(ii) In line 6, after the words "weapons of mass destruction", the words "particularly nuclear weapons" should be inserted;

(iii) In line 7, after the words "mass destruction", the words "weapons, especially nuclear weapons" should be inserted;

(iv) In line 8, the words "Register of Conventional Arms" should be replaced by the words "arms register";

(v) In line 11, after the words "involvement of NGOs in promoting", the words "the international disarmament and arms control activities including" should be inserted;

(u) In paragraph 4.16, line 5, the word "negotiations" should be replaced by the words "negotiations/deliberations"; in line 6, after the phrase "weapons of mass destruction", the words "especially nuclear disarmament; provide assistance in the" should be inserted; in line 7, after the phrase "on specific issues in the field of", the words "mass destruction" should be replaced by "disarmament and the development of sophisticated and advanced conventional weapons";

(v) Paragraph 4.19 should be deleted;

(w) A new paragraph should be inserted, reading:

"The Committee noted the role of the Conference on Disarmament in Geneva as the single multilateral negotiating forum of the international community in the field of disarmament";

(x) The Committee recommended that the programme narrative of section 4 should be revised in accordance with the medium-term plan for the period 1998–2001;

(y) The Committee emphasized the role of the Conference on Disarmament in Geneva, and its subsidiary bodies, as the single multilateral negotiating forum of the international community in the field of disarmament;

(z) The Committee recognized that the role of the Secretariat was confined to servicing the negotiating bodies within the United Nations;

(aa) The Committee underlined that the role of the Department for Disarmament Affairs should not result in a duplication of activities of the Conference on Disarmament in Geneva.

Conclusion and recommendation

132. **The Committee recommended that the General Assembly carefully review the programme narrative for section 4.**

Section 5. Peacekeeping operations and special missions

133. At its 29th meeting, on 23 June 1999, the Committee for Programme and Coordination considered section 5, Peacekeeping operations and special missions, of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2000–2001.

134. The representative of the Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations introduced the budget section and responded to queries raised during the Committee's consideration of the budget section.

Discussion

135. Support was given to the activities of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations. It was agreed that the peacekeeping activities were becoming more complex and were performing various functions. The view was expressed that the Department was carrying out its programme of work effectively and that peacekeeping missions constituted an important mechanism in the maintenance of peace and security. It was stressed, however, that prior to undertaking peacekeeping missions, every effort should be made to seek the early resolution of conflicts through pacific settlement of disputes by the parties concerned through negotiation, inquiry, mediation, conciliation, arbitration, judicial settlement, resort to regional agencies or arrangements, or other peaceful means in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations. While the need to strengthen regional arrangements was emphasized and cooperation with regional organizations was welcomed, it was pointed out that in undertaking those activities, the Department must strictly follow relevant regulations and mandates. The view was expressed that a clear division of labour between different United Nations bodies should be taken into consideration in peacekeeping operations in order to avoid duplication and overlapping.

136. The presentation of the programme narrative was welcomed as it had been formulated with a view to meeting the mandates of Member States. It was noted that the activities contained therein were guided by the medium-term plan for the period 1998–2001. It was

pointed out, however, that the terminology used could be better formulated and better harmonized with the text of the medium-term plan. Satisfaction was expressed with the implementation of General Assembly resolution 51/243 of 15 September 1997 regarding the phasing out of gratis personnel. The view was also expressed that following the phasing out of gratis personnel, the military expertise of the Department should be ensured in the consolidation of the Office of the Military and Civilian Police.

137. Support was given to the restructuring of the Department and the distribution of functions therein in order to respond more effectively to its mandates. Importance was attached to the activities of the Lessons Learned Unit, the Mine Action Service and training. The mergers of the Lessons Learned Unit with the Policy Planning Unit and of the Mine Action Service with the Field Administration and Logistics Division were noted.

138. The view was expressed that activities related to the liquidation of assets, the processing of claims for contingent-owned equipment, the development of safety aspects of mine clearance, as well as other safety standards, should be implemented at the earliest possible date. The need for coordination with other organizations and institutions in the development of security and safety standards and guidelines was stressed.

139. The need to improve contacts with Member States as well as with the media in this area was emphasized.

140. The view was expressed that the Department should continue to assess its work programme and refine those elements which were not effective and/or were not functional, as requested in the Regulations and Rules Governing Programme Planning, the Programme Aspects of the Budget, the Monitoring of Implementation and the Methods of Evaluation.

141. It was pointed out that the description of outputs under subprogramme 2.3 was too detailed, and difficulties arose in reviewing the activities enumerated under the subprogramme. The view was expressed that in the future the listing of outputs should be consolidated.

142. It was noted that while certain activities under the programme were of a permanent nature, those activities continued to be funded on a temporary basis from resources under the support account for peacekeeping operations.

143. Satisfaction was expressed regarding the inclusion of expected accomplishments and the progress achieved so far. The view was also expressed that they were still far too broad and not specific enough. In the context of future programme budget proposals, therefore, the formulation of expected accomplishments should be further refined with a view to facilitating their measurement at the end of the biennium. The view was also expressed that, in some instances, the formulation of expected accomplishments was not feasible for some peacekeeping activities.

144. Support was also given to the two peacekeeping missions funded from the regular budget, the United Nations Truce Supervision Organization and the United Nations Military Observer Group in India and Pakistan.

Conclusions and recommendations

145. The Committee recommended that the General Assembly approve the programme narrative of section 5, Peacekeeping operations, subject to the following modifications:

(a) In the last sentence of paragraph 5.5, the words "other missions" should be replaced with "good offices, preventive diplomacy, peacemaking and humanitarian missions";

(b) In the beginning of paragraph 5.6, the following text should be inserted:

> **"Every effort will be made to seek the early resolution of conflicts through pacific settlement of disputes by the parties concerned through negotiation, inquiry, mediation, conciliation, arbitration, judicial settlement, resort to regional agencies or arrangements, or other peaceful means in accordance with the Charter. However, peacekeeping will be one of the key instruments available to the United Nations to resolve conflicts and to maintain international peace and security."**

Section 6. Peaceful uses of outer space

146. At its 28th meeting, on 22 June 1999, the Committee for Programme and Coordination considered section 6, Peaceful use of outer space, of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2000–2001 (A/54/6 (Sect. 6)).

147. The representative of the Secretary-General introduced the budget section and responded to questions raised during the Committee's consideration of the budget section.

Discussion

148. Support was expressed for the activities undertaken by the Office for Outer Space Affairs. It was noted that the activities in space technology served as an important tool for developing countries in the areas of remote sensing, telecommunications and meteorology. It was also noted with appreciation that the programme of activities of the section was implemented efficiently and effectively by the Office of Outer Space Affairs.

149. The view was expressed that the description of expected accomplishments should be refined to ensure that they are measurable.

Conclusions and recommendations

150. The Committee recommended that the General Assembly approve the programme narrative of section 6, Peaceful use of outer space, of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2000–2001, subject to the inclusion of the words "and sustained economic growth", at the end of the penultimate sentence of paragraph 6.4, and after the words "sustainable development" in the first sentence of paragraph 6.5.

151. In the light of the limited number of staff, the Committee appreciated the activities of the Office of Outer Space Affairs in the preparations for the Third United Nations Conference on the Exploration and Peaceful Uses of Outer Space (UNISPACE III).

Section 8. Legal affairs

152. At its 33rd and 34th meetings, on 24 June 1999, the Committee considered section 8, Legal affairs, of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2000–2001.[2]

153. The representative of the Secretary-General introduced the budget section and responded to queries raised during the Committee's consideration of the budget section.

Discussion

154. Members expressed support for the programme and expressed appreciation for the approach used in the preparation of the overview of the programme budget fascicle for legal affairs, which provided a succinct and clear summary of the subprogrammes and the required resources.

155. It was stressed that particular attention should be given to the study, teaching, dissemination and wider appreciation of international law and that an adequate level of resources should be allocated to that end, in accordance with paragraph 7 of General Assembly resolution 52/152 of 15 December 1997. In that connection it was noted that, while the use of electronic media for the dissemination of materials on international law was commendable, account must be taken of the needs of developing countries which might not have easy access to such media. A view was expressed that emphasis should be placed upon the continued issuance of printed materials, which should be disseminated widely. It was also emphasized that efforts should be made to ensure that publications of the Office of Legal Affairs were not limited to the English language and that they were made available in other languages of the United Nations.

156. Emphasis was also placed upon the fellowship programmes under subprogrammes 3 and 4. It was also stressed that such programmes should be strengthened.

157. Appreciation was expressed for the actions undertaken by the Office of Legal Affairs to reduce the backlog in the publication of the United Nations *Treaty Series* and to expedite the preparation and publication of *Supplements* to the *Repertory of Practice of United Nations Organs*.

158. It was noted that the Office of Legal Affairs provided legal services to other offices of the Organization with respect to work that might have legal implications for the Organization and in that connection it was noted that the Office had the responsibility for protecting the legal integrity of the United Nations.

159. Views were expressed indicating appreciation for the inclusion of the paragraphs on expected accomplishments. However, it was pointed out that in some cases there was no clear distinction between accomplishments, activities and targets. It was observed that expected accomplishments should be formulated in a way that would facilitate the measurement of the subsequent degree of attainment. It was also pointed out that the formulation of expected accomplishments was not feasible for some of the activities implemented by the Office of Legal Affairs.

160. The exclusion from the Committee's agenda of work of section 7, International Court of Justice, of the programme budget for the biennium 2000–2001 was noted. The view was expressed that the requirements detailed by the International Court in paragraphs 38 to 43 of its report (A/53/326) submitted pursuant to General Assembly resolution 52/161 of 15 December 1997 should have been included in section 7 of the programme budget. Reference was made to paragraph 127 of the report of the Committee on its thirty-first session[3] and it was recalled that since that time the proposed programme budget for the International Court of Justice had not been included for consideration by the Committee. A view was expressed that only the Committee itself had the authority to determine what items ought to be included in its agenda. In that connection it was pointed out that the Committee, at its organizational session in March 1999, had approved the inclusion of section 7 in its agenda.

Conclusion and recommendation

161. The Committee recommended that the General Assembly approve the programme narrative of section 8, Legal affairs, of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2000–2001.

Section 9. Economic and social affairs

162. At its 23rd and 24th meetings, on 21 June 1999, the Committee for Programme and Coordination considered section 9, Economic and social affairs, of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2000–2001 (A/54/6 (Sect. 9)).

163. The representative of the Secretary-General introduced the budget section and responded to queries raised during the Committee's consideration thereof.

Discussion

164. Support was expressed for this programme, the overall orientation of which is to strengthen the role of the United Nations in the promotion of international cooperation for development. Its key role in the promotion of the development of the developing countries and in providing support to the intergovernmental processes in the economic and social fields was recognized.

165. The view was expressed that the work of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs is to assist Member States at their request and in accordance with their national policies aimed at the promotion of sustained economic growth and sustainable development.

166. The view was expressed that poverty alleviation, gender mainstreaming and the advancement of women should be considered as priority activities. The view was also expressed that particular attention should be paid to the special needs of Africa and least developed countries, small island developing States, South-South cooperation and financing for development.

167. The view was expressed that the narrative on expected accomplishments needed further refinement in order to ascertain achievement or otherwise. The view was also expressed that programme managers needed to implement more fully the Regulations and Rules Governing Programme Planning, the Programme Aspects of the Budget, Monitoring of Implementation and the Methods of Evaluation, which require self-evaluation and identification of activities which are inefficient, ineffective or irrelevant. The view was expressed that the formulation of expected accomplishments was not feasible for some activities dealing with economic and social affairs.

168. Concern was expressed about the decline in extrabudgetary resources and the negative effect that such reductions might have on the implementation of activities. It was stressed that the estimates of extrabudgetary resources under the Trust Fund for the Implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform of Action for the biennium 2000–2001 should be higher than in the biennium 1998–1999. The view was expressed that every effort should be made to implement all the activities under subprogramme 2, Gender issues and advancement of women. The view was also expressed that the Department of Economic and Social Affairs should implement all the activities included in its programme of work.

169. The view was expressed that the activities of subprogramme 2 should lead to improvement of the status of women in the United Nations Secretariat by ensuring the upward mobility of women in the General Service staff category, irrespective of nationality, through the competitive examinations for promotion to the Professional category of staff members from other categories ("G to P exams"). The view was also expressed that the objective of 50/50 gender distribution by the year 2000 should be reflected in paragraph 9.66 of the section. It was suggested that gender issues should be incorporated into all programmes of the United Nations system and that subprogramme 2 should become a programme, since the subject was broad.

170. The view was expressed with concern that, after the streamlining of the Secretariat in the context of the reform, the new Department of Economic and Social Affairs should have benefited from more extrabudgetary resources, instead of experiencing a decline.

171. The view was expressed that the narrative dealing with inter-agency affairs, under Executive direction and management, needed to be elaborated further.

172. The view was expressed on the need for more cooperation between the Department of Economic and Social Affairs and United Nations funds and programmes in carrying out South-South cooperation activities.

173. It was noted that, in a number of cases, activities had been proposed without proper mandates and that, in other cases, the proposed activities did not appear to cover the issues in all their aspects.

174. The view was expressed that there was a need to maintain strong interlinkages between the subprogrammes of section 9, to enable the intergovernmental processes to address the economic and social issues, in particular, cross-cutting issues, in an integrated manner.

175. The view was expressed that activities related to the implementation of the world solar programme 1996–2005 should be included in the programme of work of the section.

176. While the emphasis in the narrative on electronic dissemination of publications was noted, it was stressed that the Department should continue to use traditional means of dissemination for the benefit of those not in a position to use electronic means.

177. It was noted that, pursuant to General Assembly resolution 52/198 of 18 December 1997, the regular budget of the United Nations ceased financing the activities of the Interim Secretariat of the Convention to Combat Desertification in those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, particularly in Africa on 31 December 1998 and that, as from 1 January 1999, the activities of the Permanent Secretariat were funded exclusively through assessed contributions of the parties to the Convention and other extrabudgetary resources.

178. The view was expressed that, in the context of the preparations for the 2000 Millennium Assembly, the United Nations should initiate partnership relationships with major religious institutions for a close cooperation in finding solutions to some important economic and social problems of the world. The view was expressed that the non-governmental organizations and other institutions have their own process of preparation for the 2000 Millennium Assembly.

179. The view was expressed that the activities related to economic coercive measures imposed on developing countries, included in subprogramme 8, Public Administration, finance and development, should be moved to subprogramme 7, Global development trends, issues and policies.

180. The view was expressed that, given the significant increased workload and the level of responsibility of the Non-Governmental Organizations Section of the Secretariat, it should have all the required resources in order to enable it to carry out efficiently its mandate, in particular to support substantively the Committee of Non-Governmental Organizations.

Conclusions and recommendations

181. The Committee recommended that the General Assembly approve the programme narrative of section 9, Economic and social affairs, of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2000–2001, subject to the following modifications:

(a) In the penultimate sentence of paragraph 9.4, the word "landlocked" should be inserted after the words "least developed countries", and this change should be reflected throughout the entire narrative of section 9, wherever reference is made to "least developed countries and small island developing States";

(b) In paragraph 9.58, line 4, after the phrase "in particular its Second Committee, and," the words "as appropriate" should be deleted;

(c) In paragraph 9.98, line 6, after the phrase "Agenda 21, adopted by the General Assembly at its nineteenth special session (resolution S-19/2)," the phrase "the resolution endorsing the World Solar Programme 1996–2005 as a contribution to the overall sustainable development agenda, adopted by the General Assembly at its fifty-third session (resolution 53/7)," should be inserted;

(d) Add a paragraph 9.103 *bis* as follows:

"9.103 *bis*. In compliance with General Assembly resolution 53/7 of 16 October 1998, concrete action will be undertaken by the Secretary-General in consultation with the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and in cooperation with the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and other relevant organizations to ensure that the World Solar Programme 1996–2005 is fully integrated and brought into the mainstream of the efforts of the United Nations system to attain the objective of sustained economic growth and sustainable development.";

(e) In paragraphs 9.105 (a) (v), 9.105 (b) (iii), 9.105 (d) (i) and 9.107, after the phrase "integrated water resources management" the words "and development" should be inserted and this change should be reflected throughout the entire narrative of section 9, wherever reference is made to "integrated water resources management".

182. The Committee noted the increasing workload and responsibilities of the Non-Governmental Organizations Section, which prevented it from carrying out its activities efficiently, effectively and expeditiously, and welcomed the proposal to strengthen this activity by allocating adequate resources in the proposed programme budget.

Section 10. Africa: New Agenda for Development

183. At its 25th meeting, on 21 June 1999, the Committee for Programme and Coordination considered section 10, Africa: New Agenda for Development, of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2000–2001 (A/54/6 (Sect. 10)).

184. The representative of the Secretary-General introduced the budget section and responded to queries raised during the Committee's consideration of the budget section.

Discussion

185. The priority assigned to the development of Africa by the General Assembly was reaffirmed and support was expressed for the programme. It was proposed that the Cairo Agenda for Action: Relaunching Africa's Economic and Social Development,[4] which states Africa's development priorities, should be cited in the programme budget document. It was suggested that recent mandates, such as General Assembly resolutions 53/90 of 7 December 1998 on the implementation of the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s and 53/92 of 7 December 1998 on the causes of conflict and the promotion of durable peace and sustainable development in Africa should also be referred to in the narrative of the section.

186. The view was expressed that the programme should be more operationally oriented and should comprise tangible actions towards improving the situation in Africa. In this connection, it was observed that available resources should primarily benefit activities taking place in the field.

187. It was, however, emphasized that the programme was not designed to implement programmes and operational activities for African development, but rather to be a catalyst and coordinate and promote activities undertaken by other programmes and entities directly responsible for such activities. It was recalled that the programme was to play an advocacy role to ensure that the issues related to African development remained on the agenda within the United Nations system and the international community.

188. It was felt that the resources for the programme should be increased. The view was expressed that better balance in terms of resources should be provided between the subprogrammes. The view was also expressed that the value added of the programme was minimal and, as a result, the proposed increase in the resources could not be supported.

189. Concern was expressed regarding the possible overlap and duplication between the activities of the three subprogrammes and between the subprogrammes and those of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)-based secretariat of the United Nations System-wide Special Initiative for the implementation of the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s. The view was expressed that the resources and activities of the programme were too scattered, hence better focus for the programme and its activities was required. It was observed that the relevant units in the Department of Economic and Social Affairs, the Economic Commission for Africa and the Department of Public Information, responsible respectively for subprogrammes 1, 2 and 3, had made particular efforts not only to coordinate the activities proposed in the three subprogrammes, but also to coordinate the activities with the activities of other units concerned. As a result, it was felt that duplication or overlap of activities had been averted.

190. It was noted with concern that the decline in the availability of extrabudgetary resources under the section would affect adversely the implementation of the programme of activities. It was observed that the number of posts funded from extrabudgetary resources was expected to be reduced and that increased regular budget resources would be needed to ensure that the mandated activities under the programme would be implemented.

191. It was considered that the expected accomplishments should be more precisely described so as to allow measurement of the extent to which they had been achieved. The view was expressed that programme managers needed to implement more fully the Regulations and Rules Governing Programme Planning, the Programme Aspects of the Budget, the Monitoring of Implementation and the Methods of Evaluation, which require self-evaluation and identification of activities that are inefficient, ineffective or irrelevant. The view was also expressed that the formulation of expected accomplishments was not feasible for some activities dealing with economic and social affairs.

Conclusions and recommendations

192. The Committee recommended that the General Assembly approve the programme narrative of section 10, Africa: New Agenda for Development, of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2000–2001 with the following modifications:

(a) At the end of the third sentence of paragraph 10.2 the words "in accordance with General Assembly resolution 53/90 of 7 December 1998 and in the context of the Cairo Agenda for Action: Relaunching Africa's Economic and Social Development" should be added;

(b) At the end of paragraph 10.2 a new sentence should be added, reading:

"In its resolution 53/92 of 7 December 1998, the General Assembly welcomed the recommendations of the Secretary-General and requested him to submit a progress report on the implementation of the recommendations to the Assembly at its fifty-fourth session".

193. The Committee noted the coordination efforts among the various entities for the implementation of this subprogramme and encouraged the continuation of those efforts.

Section 11A. Trade and development

194. At its 16th meeting, on 16 June 1999, the Committee for Programme and Coordination considered section 11A, Trade and development, of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2000–2001 (A/54/6 (Sect. 11A)).

195. The representative of the Secretary-General introduced the budget section and responded to queries raised during the Committee's consideration thereof.

Discussion

196. The view of the importance of the activities of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), which is the focal point within the United Nations system for the integrated treatment of trade, finance, technology, investment and sustainable development, was stressed. Accordingly, the significance of the programme as a whole was emphasized.

197. It was noted that the structure and presentation of the programme had improved and that this trend should continue. It was generally agreed that the programme of work fully reflected the medium-term plan for the period 1998–2001 and that the deliberations of the Working Party on the Medium-term Plan and the Programme Budget had been taken into account.

198. The view was expressed on the importance of UNCTAD's contribution to the follow-up of the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s. In particular, UNCTAD had an important role in assisting African countries in the area of securing greater market access, enhancing export value-added, identifying trade policy options and their rights and obligations under the rules of the World Trade Organization, attracting foreign direct investment and managing external debt. The programme budget needed to reflect those activities in a clearer and prominent manner, including through an appropriate level of resources.

199. The importance of the programme was stressed, in particular that of subprogramme 5, Least developed, landlocked and island developing countries.

200. Great importance was attached to the tenth session of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, the Third United Nations Conference on Least Developed Countries and the Fourth United Nations Conference to Review All Aspects of Multilaterally Agreed Equitable Principles and Rules for the Control of Restrictive Business Practices.

201. The importance of activities related to technology in the context of capacity-building in developing countries was pointed out. The need to strengthen those activities for developing countries and countries with economies in transition was also mentioned.

202. The view was expressed that the issue of development of skills training, human resources development in small and medium-sized enterprises and skills development of disadvantaged groups should also be given attention in programme activities to be undertaken by UNCTAD.

203. The view was expressed for enhanced attention by UNCTAD to the current difficulties of countries with economies in transition, in fields such as privatization, financial and banking system, small and medium-sized enterprises, investments and others.

204. The view was expressed that UNCTAD had a major role to play in the process relating to the high-level intergovernmental event on financing for development. It was emphasized that the UNCTAD secretariat should continue to participate in and provide support to the preparatory process of that event, as well as to assist the developing countries in that regard. The proposed programme budget did not reflect that, a fact which should be rectified, and specific activities and the manner in which it would be implemented should be clearly mentioned.

205. The view was expressed that a reference to General Assembly resolution 51/167 of 16 December 1996, by which the Assembly endorsed the Midrand Declaration, "A Partnership for Growth and Development", should be included in paragraph 11A.14 of the proposed programme budget.

206. The view was expressed with regard to the support that UNCTAD should provide with regard to the establishment of capacity-building in developing countries for future international trade negotiations, particularly for the third Ministerial Conference of the World Trade Organization.

207. With respect to financial resources, concern was expressed regarding the proposed level of resources in view of the heavy programme of work. It was felt that the distribution of resources among the five subprogrammes should be more balanced. In that connection, the importance of subprogramme 1 was highlighted. At the same time, however, it was noted that budgetary constraints would not enable greater redeployment among the subprogrammes.

208. As regards human resources, the decreasing number of posts, especially in certain priority areas of work, was noted with concern. Observations regarding the high level of resources under consultants were made and the importance of clearly delineating the responsibilities of the staff, consultants and members of ad hoc expert groups was also mentioned.

209. The view was expressed that the Committee had not received a satisfactory explanation of the specific purpose for which ad hoc expert groups would be convened.

210. The view was expressed that savings achieved by UNCTAD should remain within the organization and that subprogramme 5, Least developed, landlocked and island developing countries, should be given closer attention in terms of resource allocation.

211. Concern was expressed that the scope of international cooperation and inter-agency coordination and liaison (para. 11A.25 (c)) had been expanded, as compared with the programme budget for 1998–1999, to include "civil society, notably non-governmental organizations, professional associations, trade unions and academia, as well as the business community" without mentioning the legislative authority to do so and whether that would entail a redistribution of resources.

212. The view was also expressed that the follow-up on evaluation of activities should continue, that further thought should be given on how to measure the expected accomplishments and that duplication of the activities of regional economic commissions and other relevant organizations should be avoided. The view was also expressed that further thought should be given to the feasibility of expected accomplishments in the section.

Conclusions and recommendations

213. The Committee recommended that the General Assembly approve the programme narrative of section 11A, Trade and development, of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2000–2001.

214. The Committee noted that the Trade and Development Board had yet to take a decision on the programme of work of UNCTAD for the biennium 2000–2001. The Committee therefore recommended to the General Assembly that it consider the programme narrative of section 11A in the light of the decision that the Trade and Development Board might take thereon.

215. The Committee recommended the deletion, in table 11A.23 of section 11A, of the text dealing with the Committee for Programme and Coordination since that text did not reflect recommendations of the Committee.

216. The Committee recommended that the UNCTAD secretariat should continue to participate in and provide support to the preparatory process of the high-level intergovernmental event on financing for development as well as to assist the developing countries in that regard.

217. The Committee took note of UNCTAD's contribution to the follow-up of the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s and recommended that UNCTAD continue its important role in assisting African countries in that regard.

218. The Committee stressed the importance of the programme, in particular subprogramme 5, Least developed, landlocked and island developing countries. The Committee emphasized the importance of the office of the Special Coordinator for Africa and the Least Developed Countries and also the work on those countries carried out in all divisions of UNCTAD.

Section 11B. International Trade Centre UNCTAD/WTO

219. At its 17th meeting, on 16 June 1999, the Committee for Programme and Coordination considered section 11B, International Trade Centre UNCTAD/WTO, of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2000–2001 (A/54/6 (Sect. 11B)).

220. The representative of the Secretary-General introduced the budget section and responded to queries raised during the Committee's consideration of the budget section.

Discussion

221. General support was expressed for the programme of work carried out by the Centre.

222. It was stressed that the new administrative arrangements should not undermine the implementation of the programme of work by the Centre.

223. It was also stated that consideration should be given to a procedure which would enable the Committee to review the Centre's programme of work.

Conclusions and recommendations

224. The Committee noted with concern and regret that, under the new administrative arrangements approved by the General Assembly at its fifty-third session, the detailed programme of work proposed for the Centre for the biennium 2000–2001 would be submitted directly to the Assembly in the fall of 1999. As a result the Committee was not in a position to provide comments.

225. The Committee decided to inform the General Assembly that it would not be in a position to render comments on the programme narratives of section 11B, International Trade Centre UNCTAD/WTO.

Section 12. Environment

226. At its 16th and 17th meetings, on 16 June 1999, the Committee for Programme and Coordination considered section 12, Environment, of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2000–2001 (A/54/6 (Sect. 12)).

227. The representative of the Secretary-General introduced the budget section and responded to queries raised during the Committee's consideration of the document.

Discussion

228. Support was expressed for the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) as the principal institution within the United Nations system in the field of environment. Its positive contribution in addressing environmental issues was recognized. In this context, it was noted that as consultations were still under way in the General Assembly on the report of the Secretary-General on environment and human settlements (A/53/463) there might be a need for the Secretariat to adjust the programme with the outcome of such consultations.

229. It was noted that the resources of the programme should be considered in conjunction with section 27G, Administration, Nairobi, and that the savings, including savings in posts, resulting from the transfer of functions from UNEP to the United Nations Office at Nairobi needed to be clearly indicated.

230. It was observed that the format of the presentation of the section was not totally harmonized with the format followed in other sections and that a breakdown of resources by subprogrammes was not provided. Concern was expressed about the use in the budget section of concepts and terms that had not been endorsed and were still under consideration by the General Assembly. In that regard, it was noted that there might be a need to review the inclusion in the narrative of such concepts in accordance with pertinent decisions of the General Assembly and the Regulations and Rules Governing Programme Planning, the Programme Aspects of the Budget, the Monitoring of Implementation and the Methods of Evaluation. The view was expressed that there was scope for the refinement of the paragraph on expected accomplishments.

231. It was noted with concern that the programme was funded primarily from voluntary contributions. It was stressed that UNEP required adequate resources, in particular from the regular budget, to implement its programme of work.

232. The view was expressed that the Mercure Telecommunications System should be partially funded through the regular budget.

233. The view was expressed that there was a need for coordination with other United Nations agencies in order to ensure complementarity and avoid duplication.

234. The view was expressed that programme managers needed to implement more fully the Regulations and Rules Governing Programme Planning, the Programme Aspects of the Budget, the Monitoring of Implementation and the Methods of Evaluation, which require self-evaluation and identification of activities that are inefficient, ineffective or irrelevant. The view was also expressed that the formulation of expected accomplishments was not feasible for some activities dealing with economic and social affairs.

Conclusions and recommendations

235. The Committee recommended that the General Assembly request the Secretary-General to reformulate the narrative of section 12, Environment, in conformity with the standard presentation of the other sections of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2000–2001, the Regulations and Rules Governing Programme Planning, the Programme Aspects of the Budget, the Monitoring of Implementation and the Methods of Evaluation and the resolutions and decisions of relevant intergovernmental bodies, subject to the final approval of the General Assembly. The revised narrative should be submitted to the General Assembly for consideration at its fifty-fourth session.

Section 13. Human settlements

236. At its 17th and 18th meetings, on 16 and 17 June 1999, the Committee for Programme and Coordination considered section 13, Human settlements, of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2000–2001 (A/54/6 (Sect. 13)).

237. The representative of the Secretary-General introduced the budget section and responded to queries raised during the Committee's consideration of the document.

Discussion

238. The ongoing process of revitalization of the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements was welcomed and supported. It was noted that the refocusing of the programme of work resulted in two subprogrammes instead of four and corresponded to the two major themes of the Habitat Agenda.

239. The view was expressed that the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements was undergoing a process of restructuring to make it more responsive to the requirements of implementing the Habitat Agenda as well as to the needs of Member States. In this connection, there was a need for the international community to support the Centre.

240. It was observed that the work programme of the United Nations Habitat and Human Settlements Foundation for the biennium 2000–2001 was approved by the Commission on Human Settlements at its seventeenth session in May 1999. The need to review and update the programme budget document to reflect the outcome of the session was underscored.

241. Concern was expressed about the use in the document of concepts and terms that had not been endorsed and were still under consideration by the General Assembly. In this regard, it was noted that there might be a need to review the inclusion in the narrative of such concepts in accordance with pertinent decisions of the General Assembly and the Regulations and Rules Governing Programme Planning, the Programme Aspects of the Budget, the Monitoring of Implementation and the Methods of Evaluation. The view was expressed that there was scope for the refinement of the paragraph on expected accomplishments. The view was expressed that programme managers needed to implement more fully the above-mentioned Regulations and Rules, which require self-evaluation and identification of activities that are inefficient, ineffective or irrelevant. The view was also expressed that the formulation of expected accomplishments was not feasible for some activities dealing with economic and social affairs.

242. It was emphasized that the programme of work should be consistent with the medium-term plan, taking into account the outcome of the restructuring of Habitat. It was noted that the issues of rural settlements did not receive sufficient attention and that they should be addressed by the programme, which tended to focus too much on urbanization and city issues. Attention was drawn to the need to support developing countries, as well as countries

with economies in transition, in their efforts to implement the Habitat Agenda. It was also suggested that there should be more coordinated actions and cooperation within the United Nations system to facilitate the implementation of the activities under the section.

243. The need to recruit consultants on a broad geographical basis was underlined.

244. It was felt that the overall amount of the resources requested for the special session of the General Assembly for an overall review and appraisal of the implementation of the outcome of the Habitat Agenda might not be sufficient. In this respect it was observed with concern that other sections of the proposed programme budget also contained resource requirements for the special session. The view was expressed that all the resource requirements for the special session should be reflected under section 13. It was observed that the resource growth in the section was associated mostly with the requirements of the special session.

245. Concern was expressed regarding the relatively high level of extrabudgetary resources vis-à-vis the regular budget resources. At the same time, it was observed that the projections for extrabudgetary resources might be over-optimistic. It was emphasized that the cost-sharing arrangements in Nairobi between the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements, the United Nations Office at Nairobi and UNEP needed to be clarified and that savings resulting from the restructuring of the Centre, in particular in connection with the transfer of certain functions to the United Nations Office at Nairobi, needed to be identified.

246. It was stressed that all the components under the two subprogrammes should be addressed adequately, and balanced funding should be provided for their implementation.

Conclusions and recommendations

247. The Committee recommended that the General Assembly request the Secretary-General to reformulate the narrative of section 13, Human settlements, in conformity with the standard presentation of the other sections of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2000–2001, the Regulations and Rules Governing Programme Planning, the Programme Aspects of the Budget, the Monitoring of Implementation and the Methods of Evaluation and the resolutions and decisions of relevant intergovernmental bodies subject to the final approval of the General Assembly. The revised narrative should be submitted to the General Assembly for consideration at its fifty-fourth session.

248. The Committee recommended that the eighth sentence of paragraph 13.3 referring to the deliberations of the Committee of Permanent Representatives, which has no official mandate, be deleted.

249. The Committee recommended that in the second sentence of paragraph 13.25 the word "obligations" be replaced with "role" and the word "dwellings" be replaced with "housing".

Section 14. Crime prevention and criminal justice

250. At its 18th and 19th meetings, on 17 June 1999, the Committee considered section 14, Crime prevention and criminal justice, of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2000–2001 (A/54/6 (Sect. 14)).

251. The representative of the Secretary-General introduced the budget section and responded to queries raised during the Committee's consideration of the budget section.

Discussion

252. Support was expressed for the programme, which was one of the priorities of the medium-term plan. The view was expressed that the programme of work was far too ambitious considering the available resources.

253. With regard to the activities on the prevention of terrorism, a question was raised concerning the division of labour between the United Nations Centre for International Crime Prevention and other United Nations bodies. The representative of the Centre explained that the work of the Centre in this field was not operational, but rather resulted from a division of labour with the Office of Legal Affairs, which supported the General Assembly's normative activities in this field, and that the Centre focused on research and technical cooperation.

254. It was stated that the narrative had to be strictly consistent with the mandates contained in the medium-term plan and that some activities, in particular the drafting of an additional protocol on computer-related crime and a convention against corruption and bribery, were not based on specific mandates. It was observed that such proposed international instruments had the same status as the instrument on money-laundering. The view was expressed that activities on early warning mechanisms should not be included in the programme narrative, since there was no mandate for those activities.

255. It was proposed to note with appreciation that a number of activities dealing with terrorism, which was one of the priorities of the Organization, were included in the programme of work, and support was expressed for the full implementation of those mandated activities by the Centre for International Crime Prevention.

256. The proposed increase in resources was supported. The view was expressed that the overall level of resources proposed for the biennium 2000–2001 was still insufficient to undertake the wide range of activities required by existing mandates. While it was considered that the use of consultants was excessive, the view was also expressed that they were necessary, given the high complexity of the tasks, and that they should be used wisely.

257. The view was expressed that the narrative did not adequately distinguish between core functions to be financed through the regular budget and activities to be financed through extrabudgetary resources.

258. Statements of expected accomplishments for the biennium were welcomed although it was regretted that those statements were not always accompanied by indicators of performance which would make it possible to measure the accomplishments.

259. With regard to publications, concern was expressed regarding the need to establish a balance between traditional and electronic dissemination methods to ensure that the needs of those who, for the time being, were unable to access information technology, such as the Internet, were met.

260. It was also observed that the narrative did not include references to gender mainstreaming.

261. The view was expressed that non-governmental organizations which had relations with the Centre should also have consultative status with the Economic and Social Council.

Conclusions and recommendations

262. The Committee recommended that the General Assembly request the Secretary-General to ensure that the decision of the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice to integrate a gender perspective into all the activities of the Centre on International Crime Prevention would be implemented.

263. The Committee recommended that the General Assembly approve the programme narrative of section 14, Crime prevention and criminal justice, of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2000–2001, subject to the following modifications:

(a) Throughout the document, the words "in all its forms and manifestations" should be inserted after the word "terrorism";

(b) In paragraph 14.3 (b), the words "to improve the capacity of States" should be replaced by the words "to support the strengthening of the capacity of Governments, at their request";

(c) In paragraph 14.5, the words "to reform legislation" should be replaced by the words "to improve legislation";

(d) In the third sentence of paragraph 14.8, the words "including law reform" should be replaced by the words "the improvement of their legislation";

(e) Paragraph 14.18 should be replaced by:

> **"The focus will be, in particular, on issues such as transnational organized crime, terrorism, the laundering of the proceeds of crime, corruption, environmental offences, illicit traffic in children and economic crime, which are all of primary concern to the international community";**

(f) In paragraph 14.21 (a) (iii), the words "including early warning mechanisms" should be deleted after the words "financial crime".

264. Bearing in mind that activities related to the drafting of an additional protocol on computer-related crime to the convention against transnational organized crime and an international convention against corruption and bribery are not based in a legislative mandate, the Committee recommends the deletion of all references to those proposed instruments in the following paragraphs of this budget section: 14.17 (a), 14.20 (b), 14.21 (a) (i) g and h, 14.21 (a) (ii) i and 14.24 (a).

Section 15. International drug control

265. At its 19th and 20th meetings, on 17 June 1999, the Committee considered section 15, International drug control, of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2000–2001 (A/54/6 (Sect. 15)).

266. The representative of the Secretary-General introduced the budget section and responded to queries raised during the Committee's consideration of the budget section.

Discussion

267. Support was expressed for the programme, which was seen as tackling an issue of worldwide importance, and was one of the areas of work designated as a priority by the General Assembly. The strengthening of the secretariat of the International Narcotics Control Board was welcomed. It was stated that the programme narrative should follow the medium-term plan closely and that, if new decisions were to be taken by the General Assembly at its fifty-fourth session, the programme of work should be adjusted accordingly. The view was expressed that the proposed programme of work did not reflect a balance between demand and supply and the need for a more balanced approach was emphasized. It was suggested that the narrative should highlight the work related to money-laundering. The view was expressed that the presentation of the general objectives of the programme was confused and opaque.

268. The importance of activities related to the issue of amphetamine type stimulants was highlighted. It was suggested that the *World Drug Report* should contain information on best practices as well as information on specific countries. The need to provide assistance to countries used as transit routes was emphasized.

269. Statements of expected accomplishments for the biennium were welcomed. The view was expressed that those statements remained general and were not accompanied by indicators of performance. The view was also expressed that expected accomplishments did not always adequately reflect the goals established at the twentieth special session of the General Assembly, held in New York in June 1998.

270. It was noted that negotiations were currently being held within the Commission on Narcotic Drugs on the procedures for the biennial reporting of States on their achievement of the goals and objectives adopted at the twentieth special session of the General Assembly. A decision on this matter was to be taken by the Commission at its resumed forty-second session to enable States to submit their first biennial reports in 2000.

271. Efforts to reinforce coordination within the United Nations system and with non-United Nations organizations were welcomed. The view was expressed that those efforts should be institutionalized, especially with the organizations outside the United Nations system. The view was also expressed that the idea of institutionalization of coordination with organizations outside the United Nations system should be further considered.

272. The proposed increase in resources, in particular for the programme of work, was noted with satisfaction and supported. It was noted, however, that the difference between core functions to be financed through the regular budget and activities to be financed through extrabudgetary funds was not sufficiently clear in the narrative. More detailed information about the different funds should have been included.

273. The view was also expressed that the proposed level of resources was not fully commensurate with the scope of the programme of work and that there was a need for balance in the distribution of resources among the various subprogrammes. It was noted that the resources earmarked for consultants had a tendency to grow and care should be taken to use consultants for substantive programmes and not for administration. The need for a coordinated effort in training was also stressed.

274. The inclusion of a narrative on gender mainstreaming and the advancement of women in the overview was welcomed and it was stated that the Secretariat should have included reference to a gender perspective in the subsequent programme of work.

Conclusions and recommendations

275. The Committee recommended that the General Assembly approve the programme narrative of section 15, International drug control, of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2000–2001 with the following modifications:

(a) At the end of the second sentence of paragraph 15.4, the words, "as well as to meet their goals and objectives established at the twentieth special session of the General Assembly held in June 1998" should be inserted;

(b) In paragraph 15.32 (d), the words "including those countries that are not members of the Association of South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN)" should be replaced by the words "and other Asian countries";

(c) In paragraph 15.35, a new subparagraph should be inserted after subparagraph (b), reading:

> "Contribution to the achievement of the goals and objectives adopted at the twentieth special session of the General Assembly";

(d) At the end of paragraph 15.36 (a) (ii) a, the words "Biennial reports on the achievement by Member States of the goals and objectives adopted at the twentieth special session of the General Assembly" should be inserted;

(e) In paragraph 15.44, a new subparagraph (h) should be inserted, reading:

> "Strengthen the capacity of the Board to prepare its report taking into account information provided by the interested Governments";

(f) In paragraph 15.48, a new subparagraph should be inserted after subparagraph (a), reading:

> "Facilitation of the examination of the biennial reports on the achievement by Member State of the goals and objectives adopted at the twentieth special session of the General Assembly";

(g) In the last sentence of paragraph 15.56, the Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO) should be inserted after the European Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction;

(h) The words "including production in enclosed premises" should be inserted in the following paragraphs:

Paragraph 15.63, fourth sentence, *after* cannabis;

Paragraph 15.64, last sentence, *after* illicit cultivation;

Paragraph 15.65, first sentence, *after* crops;

Paragraph 15.65, fourth sentence, *after* illicit cultivation;

Paragraph 15.67 (c), *after* cannabis;

Paragraph 15.67 (d), *after* cannabis;

Paragraph 15.68 (b) (iv) k, line 2, *after* crops;

Paragraph 15.68 (d) (ii), *after* crop cultivation;

Paragraph 15.68 (d) (xiii), *after* cultivation;

Paragraph 15.68 (d) (xiv), *after* crops;

Paragraph 15.68 (d) (xv), *after* cultivation;

Paragraph 15.68 (d) (xvi), *after* cultivation;

Paragraph 15.69 (a), *after* crops;

Paragraph 15.69 (b), *after* crops;

Paragraph 15.69 (d), *after* cultivated;

Paragraph 15.69 (f), *after* crops;

Paragraph 15.70, line 9, *after* cultivation;

(i) In the second sentence of paragraph 15.65, the words "at their request" should be inserted after the word "States";

(j) In the last sentence of paragraph 15.66, the words "South-West Asia" should be inserted after the words "Central and West Asia";

(k) At the end of paragraph 15.66, the words

> **"Cooperation in North America on the reduction and elimination of illicit cultivation of cannabis, including, *inter alia*, in enclosed premises, will also be of particular importance"**

should be inserted.

276. The Committee called to the attention of the General Assembly the fact that the action plan for the implementation of the Declaration on the Guiding Principles of Drug Demand Reduction, adopted by the Commission on Narcotic Drugs, will be considered by the Assembly at its fifty-fourth session. Should the General Assembly approve the plan, the Committee recommended that the narrative of subprogramme 3 be adjusted accordingly.

Section 16. Economic and social development in Africa

277. At its 21st meeting, on 18 June 1999, the Committee for Programme and Coordination considered section 16, Economic and social development in Africa, of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2000–2001 (A/54/6 (Sect.16)).

278. The representative of the Secretary-General introduced the budget section and responded to queries raised during the Committee's consideration of the budget section.

Discussion

279. Support was expressed for the programme of work proposed in the section, which was one of the priority areas of the Organization in accordance with the medium-term plan for the period 1998–2001. The reform process carried out by the Economic Commission for Africa to strengthen its programme of work, in particular the subregional development centres, was also welcomed.

280. Concern was expressed that the level of the increase in resources proposed for 2000–2001 did not represent an appropriate recognition of the priority given to the development of Africa and it was felt, in this connection, that it was necessary to provide the Commission with more adequate resources to enable it to play a leading role in the region.

281. Concern was expressed in connection with the continuing high vacancy rate in the Commission, which could jeopardize the implementation of the programme of work. General Assembly resolution 52/220 of 22 December 1997 concerning vacant posts was recalled. The view was also expressed that the new posts proposed for 2000–2001 should not be approved as long as the high vacancy rate existed. It was also observed that the proposed increase of consultancy resources may be due to the high vacancy rate and, instead of relying on consultants, in-house expertise should be developed. The view was also expressed that the new posts proposed for the two new subprogrammes should be supported, taking into account that the vacant posts were located in other areas of activity and owing to the fact that the vacancy rate was in decline.

282. The inclusion of two new subprogrammes on the advancement of women and on strengthening of the subregional development centres was welcomed. The view was expressed that the latter subprogramme would provide the necessary outreach functions and leverage of resources. However, concern was expressed that the resources currently available to the Economic Commission for Africa were insufficient and the resources for two new subprogrammes should have been provided through an overall increase of resources and not mostly through redeployment.

283. It was considered that emphasis should be also placed on the debt problem, capacity-building, trade negotiations, sustainable development, information and communications technology development, development of infrastructure, food security and eradication of poverty, as well as on the private sector and capital market development. Concern was expressed that the information and technological capacity of the Commission still lagged behind other United Nations entities and it was suggested that subprogramme 4 should be further strengthened.

284. The view was expressed that an evaluation of the impact of conflicts in Africa on the process of economic and social development should be made and lessons learned should be assessed. The question was raised as to whether the Commission has elaborated a study or intended to study the problem of countries receiving assistance for development, but using the resources for military purposes.

285. Emphasis was put on the need to ensure that savings realized during the biennium 1998–1999 by the Commission should be redeployed to the subregional development centres, in accordance with General Assembly resolution 52/220 (Sect. III, para. 70).

286. The view was expressed that the new Conference Centre in Addis Ababa should be managed more efficiently and that the provision of information on resources allocated to it should be made available in order to analyse its efficiency.

Conclusions and recommendations

287. The Committee recommended that the General Assembly approve the programme narrative of section 16, Economic and social development in Africa, of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2000–2001.

288. The Committee emphasized the necessity for the Economic Commission for Africa to continue the ongoing efforts to fill vacant posts and to maximize the utilization of economies within the Commission in full compliance with General Assembly resolution 52/220 (Sect. III, paras. 69 and 70).

Section 17. Economic and social development in Asia and the Pacific

289. At its 21st and 22nd meetings, on 18 June 1999, the Committee considered section 17, Economic and social development in Asia and the Pacific, of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2000–2001 (A/54/6 (Sect. 17)).

290. The representative of the Secretary-General introduced the budget section and responded to queries raised during the Committee's consideration of the budget section.

Discussion

291. Support was expressed for the multifaceted role of the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific as the only intergovernmental forum for regional cooperation for development for the Asian and Pacific region as a whole.

292. Support was expressed for the programme, for the emphasis given to the three major themes: regional economic cooperation, poverty alleviation and environment and natural resources development, and for the four priority areas established by the Commission. It was noted that the programme of work was in accordance with the revised medium-term plan.

293. The importance of the programme was highlighted, taking into account, in particular, the financial crisis that had occurred in the region. Appreciation was expressed for the studies undertaken by the Commission on the financial crisis in the region. Appreciation

was also expressed that emphasis will be given, *inter alia*, to research and analysis of the effects of the economic and financial crisis and to the formulation of recommendations on ways and means for countries to respond to the crisis and to minimize the attendant risks. Support was also expressed for activities related to the countries with economies in transition. The need to enhance national capacities as regards electronic trade was emphasized. It was noted that there was no reference to coordination on environmental activities between the Commission and the United Nations Environment Programme.

294. It was noted that the proposed programme of work for 2000–2001 was the first programme formulated on the basis of the cumulative reform efforts of the Commission, which included the conference structure as determined by the Commission in 1997, the programme structure as revised and approved by the General Assembly in 1998 and the subsequent organizational structure as presented in the proposed programme budget for 2000–2001. It was stated that progress on the reforms undertaken by the Commission should continue, in particular its review and evaluation mechanisms. A view was expressed that there were too many outputs and that they should be further streamlined.

295. The reduction in the proposed resources and the negative impact of the high vacancy rate on the programme were noted with concern. Concern was expressed that the overall level of the Commission's budget has been decreasing in the last two bienniums and will further decrease by 0.3 per cent for 2000–2001. It was considered that the Commission should be given the resources necessary to enable the full implementation of its programme of work. The need to reduce the use of consultants and to transfer that expertise to staff members was highlighted. It was felt that travel expenses should be kept in check and it was noted that a large share of resources continued to be devoted to administrative services. The view was expressed that an introduction of a review mechanism was called for, in line with the recommendations of the Advisory Committee of Permanent Representatives and other Representatives Designated by Members of the Commission.

296. Concern was expressed regarding the need to establish a balance between traditional and electronic methods of disseminating information to ensure that the needs of the least developed, landlocked and island developing countries, in particular, were met. It was stressed that the technical publications of the Commission should continue to be provided through the traditional means. It was considered that further rationalization of the publications programme should be made.

297. The activities related to gender mainstreaming, gender equality and the advancement of women and to combating violence against women and trafficking in women and children were welcomed. It was noted that, in paragraph 11 of General Assembly resolution 51/65 of 12 December 1996, the regional commissions, among others, were invited to examine ways and means, within their mandates, of dealing with concerns pertaining to women migrant workers. It was suggested that subprogramme 3, Social development, should also address the issue of violence against women migrant workers, in accordance with Assembly resolution 51/65 and related legislative mandates.

298. The view was expressed that, since the Commission had stressed the importance of the issue of regional and subregional cooperation for development, necessary resources should be made available for the full implementation of these activities.

299. Statements of expected accomplishments were welcomed, although it was noted that the wording was too general and would not, in some cases, facilitate an assessment as to whether they were achieved or not. The view was also expressed that programme managers need to implement more fully the Regulations and Rules Governing Programme Planning, the Programme Aspects of the Budget, the Monitoring and Implementation and the Methods

of Evaluation, which require self-evaluation and identification of activities that are inefficient, ineffective or irrelevant.

Conclusions and recommendations

300. The Committee noted with concern the high vacancy rate in the Commission, which could negatively affect the implementation of the programme of work.

301. The Committee recommended that the General Assembly should keep under review the resource situation of the Commission to ensure that the proposed reduction will not adversely affect the full implementation of its mandated programmes and activities.

302. The Committee recommended that the General Assembly approve the programme narrative of section 17, Economic and social development in Asia and the Pacific, of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2000–2001, with the following modifications:

(a) In paragraph 17.4, the words

> **"will be further reviewed by the Commission at its fifty-fifth session, scheduled for 22 to 28 April 1999"should be replaced with "was further reviewed and approved by the Commission at its fifty-fifth session held from 22 to 28 April 1999";**

(b) In the ninth line of paragraph 17.56 (a), the words ", including women migrant workers," should be inserted after the words "violence against women".

Section 18. Economic development in Europe

303. At its 22nd meeting, on 18 June 1999, the Committee for Programme and Coordination considered section 18, Economic development in Europe, of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2000–2001 (A/54/6 (Sect.18)).

304. The representative of the Secretary-General introduced the budget section and responded to queries raised during the Committee's consideration of the budget section.

Discussion

305. Support was expressed for the programme of work proposed in this section.

306. It was stated that further strengthening should be given to those aspects of the programme related to countries with economies in transition. The trend towards interregional cooperation, particularly through the support provided by the Economic Commission for Europe (ECE) to subregional groupings and initiatives, was noted.

307. The view was expressed that indicators measuring the accomplishments should be further refined and that measures should be developed for appraising the extent to which publications reached their target groups. The view was also expressed that programme managers needed to implement more fully the programme planning, budget, monitoring and evaluation rules requiring self-evaluation and identification of programme activities that were inefficient, ineffective or irrelevant.

308. It was felt that travel and administrative expenditures should be kept under control. It was stressed that particular attention should be given to the geographical diversification of the consultants hired by the secretariat.

309. The question was raised as to how ECE could contribute to the rapid resumption of the navigation of the Danube river.

310. The importance of the active involvement of ECE in international activities relating to the reconstruction of the social and the economic infrastructure of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia was also underlined.

Conclusions and recommendations

311. The Committee commended the streamlining of the intergovernmental structure and programming procedures in compliance with the reform of ECE.

312. The Committee recommended that the General Assembly approve the programme narrative of section 18, Economic development in Europe, of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2000–2001.

Section 19. Economic and social development in Latin America and the Caribbean

313. At its 23rd meeting, on 21 June 1999, the Committee for Programme and Coordination considered section 19, Economic and social development in Latin America and the Caribbean, of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2000–2001 (A/54/6 (Sect. 19)).

314. The representative of the Secretary-General introduced the budget section and responded to queries raised during the Committee's consideration thereof.

Discussion

315. Strong support was expressed for the programme of work under the section. The importance of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean as the only regional institution that takes a systematic approach to the examination of development issues facing Latin America and Caribbean countries was reaffirmed.

316. The view was expressed that paragraph 19.4 gave the impression that the proposed programme of work of the Commission for the biennium 2000–2001 was not based on programme 17 of the medium-term plan for the period 1998–2001, as revised (A/53/6/Rev.1). It was stressed that the programme of work should be elaborated in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Regulations and Rules Governing Programme Planning, the Programme Aspects of the Budget, the Monitoring of Implementation and the Methods of Evaluation.

317. Satisfaction was expressed with the initiatives taken by the Commission in dealing with new and emerging issues in the region. Subprogrammes 5, Social development and social equity, 7, Environmental and land resource sustainability, and 12, Mainstreaming the gender perspective into regional development, were strongly supported.

318. Concern was expressed that resources had not been proposed for the implementation of activities in relation to the Central American subregion that would take into account the critical economic, social and environmental situation facing Central American countries that have recently been affected by natural disasters. It was felt that additional resources should be allocated to assessments of the socio-economic impact of natural disasters on the countries of the region.

319. Satisfaction was expressed that implementation of subprogramme 12 would be met essentially by redeployment of resources within the budget of the Commission. It was stressed that the redeployments should not have a negative impact on the releasing subprogrammes. Information was sought on the impact on the programme of work of the Commission following the incorporation of the Latin American and Caribbean Centre for Demography into the organizational structure of the Commission.

320. It was felt that the formulation of expected accomplishments required improvement, with a view to making them adequate to the objectives of the programme and measurable. The view was also expressed that the programme managers need to implement more fully the Regulations and Rules Governing Programme Planning, the Programme Aspects of the Budget, the Monitoring of the Implementation and the Methods of Evaluation, which require self-evaluation and identification of activities that are inefficient, ineffective or irrelevant. The view was expressed that the formulation of expected accomplishments was not feasible for some activities dealing with economic and social affairs.

321. The need for the Commission to continue fostering its comparative advantages and differentiated work in relation to the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank so as to avoid duplication and overlapping was stressed.

Conclusions and recommendations

322. The Committee recommended that the General Assembly approve the programme narrative of section 19, Economic and social development in Latin America and the Caribbean, of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2000–2001, with the following modifications:

(a) In paragraph 19.4, the words "three fundamental" should be replaced with the words "programme 17 of the medium-term plan for the period 1998–2001 and the following" and the phrase after the word "circumstances" should be deleted;

(b) The last sentence in paragraph 19.51 should be deleted;

(c) Paragraph 19.71 (a) should read as follows: "Support of the design and implementation of policies to strengthen domestic capacities in the macroeconomic field";

(d) The second sentence of paragraph 19.87 should be deleted.

323. The Committee noted that the implementation of this programme should be in accordance with paragraph 73, section 19, of General Assembly resolution 52/220.

Section 20. Economic and social development in Western Asia

324. At its 23rd meeting, on 21 June 1999, the Committee for Programme and Coordination considered section 20, Economic and social development in Western Asia, of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2000–2001 (A/54/6 (Sect. 20)).

325. The representative of the Secretary-General introduced the budget section and responded to queries raised during the Committee's consideration of the budget section.

Discussion

326. Support was expressed for the programme of work proposed in this section. It was noted, however, that some activities deserved greater attention.

327. The view was expressed that activities considered obsolete, ineffective or of marginal usefulness should have been identified and proposed for termination by the General Assembly.

328. The view was expressed that the text on expected accomplishments should have been more precise. It was also recognized that the approach to expected accomplishments was at an experimental stage. The view was also expressed that these expected accomplishments, required by the Regulations and Rules Governing Programme Planning, the Programme

Aspects of the Budget, the Monitoring of Implementation and the Methods of Evaluation, needed to be further refined.

329. It was noted that matters related to human rights were approached from a social and economic perspective. The view was expressed that the formulation of paragraph 20.3 (b) should be in line with the legislative mandate approved in paragraph 18.5 (h) of the medium-term plan for the period 1998–2001.

330. With respect to financial resources, it was felt that programme activities should receive a greater share in the distribution of resources within the section and that programme support should be further reduced. Concern was expressed regarding the steep decrease of extrabudgetary resources.

331. It was noted that the vacancy rate should be kept under review and measures should be taken to reduce it.

332. Views were expressed that the use of consultants should be in accordance with General Assembly guidelines and that particular attention should be given to the geographical diversification of the consultants hired by the secretariat of the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia.

Conclusions and recommendations

333. The Committee recommended that the General Assembly approve the programme narrative of section 20, Economic and social development in Western Asia, of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2000–2001 with the following modifications:

(a) The first sentence of paragraph 20.3 (b) should be: "In line with the revised medium-term plan, gender and issues pertaining to the right to development are mainstreamed in the proposed programme of work for the biennium 2000–2001".

Section 21. Regular programme of technical cooperation

334. At its 24th meeting, on 21 June 1999, the Committee for Programme and Coordination considered section 21, Regular programme of technical cooperation, of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2000–2001 (A/54/6 (Sect. 21) and Corr.1).

335. The representative of the Secretary-General introduced the budget section and responded to queries raised during the Committee's consideration of the budget section.

Discussion

336. Support was expressed for the proposals under this section. It was emphasized that the section played an important role in providing assistance to developing countries, especially least developed countries, and to the countries with economies in transition with respect to integrating themselves into a market economy. The activities on trade and development, human rights, regional and subregional advisory services, sustainable development, social development and poverty alleviation were welcomed.

337. While it was recognized that the activities under this section were by their nature difficult to describe precisely, concern was expressed about the difficulty in assessing whether there existed duplication and/or overlap between the activities carried out under this section and similar activities carried out under other relevant sections of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2000–2001.

338. The absence of a table providing information on the types and estimates of expenditures was noted with concern. The view was expressed that this section should contain an indication of expected accomplishments.

339. The view was expressed that the resources under this section should rather be included under other relevant sections of the programme budget. It was considered that such a procedure would provide greater clarity in the use of these resources and would prevent possible duplication and/or overlap.

340. It was also emphasized that guidelines should be developed to ensure the monitoring and evaluation of the activities carried out under the section and an improved control of the related resources. The view was expressed that the programme managers needed to implement more fully the Regulations and Rules Governing Programme Planning, the Programme Aspects of the Budget, the Monitoring of Implementation and the Methods of Evaluation which require self-evaluation and identification of programmed activities that are inefficient, ineffective and irrelevant.

Conclusions and recommendations

341. The Committee recommended that the General Assembly approve the programme narrative of section 21, Regular programme of technical cooperation, of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2000–2001.

Section 22. Human rights

342. At its 35th meeting, on 24 June 1999, the Committee for Programme and Coordination considered section 22, Human rights, of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2000–2001 (A/54/6 (Sect. 22)).

343. The representative of the Secretary-General introduced the budget section and responded to queries raised during the Committee's consideration of the budget section.

Discussion

344. Support was expressed for the programme of work proposed in this section and it was emphasized that the promotion of human rights was one of the priorities of the United Nations in the medium-term plan for the period 1998–2001. The view was expressed that the programme of activities proposed in this section correctly reflected the objectives of programme 19 of the medium-term plan for the period 1998–2001. The increase of resources for subprogrammes 1 and 2 was welcomed, but concern was expressed that the decrease of resources under subprogramme 3 could negatively affect the implementation of the proposed activities.

345. The view was expressed that the proposed resource increase for the section as a whole was too small, *inter alia*, as regards the right to development and the effective functioning of the human rights instruments, and that the proposed resources would not be sufficient to implement all mandated activities. Concern, however, was expressed about the increase of resources for travel and consultancy.

346. Concern was expressed that the resources proposed for activities related to development are not commensurate with the needs and requirements for full implementation of all mandates in this area.

347. The view was expressed that the programme of work was well-balanced. Support was expressed for the proposed increase of resources for the Office of the United Nations High

Commissioner for Human Rights in New York. Concern was expressed that the strengthening of the Office in New York was diverting resources from substantive activities.

348. The view was expressed that increased coordination and cooperation for the promotion and protection of human rights should be further encouraged among all United Nations organs, bodies and specialized agencies.

349. Concern was expressed that the narrative of the section was not, in some instances, in line with the text of the medium-term plan and that some non-mandated activities had been included.

350. Concern was expressed that not all human rights mandates had been equally treated. In this context, it was stressed that, in view of the historical neglect of the right to development, there is a need to give special attention to the full implementation of all activities related to the right to development.

351. Concern was also expressed that, once again, no detailed information on the distribution of resources among subprogrammes has been provided, despite observations made in this regard on previous budgetary proposals, to facilitate the review of the budget proposals by the General Assembly. In this context, regret was expressed that, because of this lack of information on the distribution of resources, it was not possible to review in detail resources allocated to the right to development under subprogramme 1 and to technical cooperation under subprogramme 3, both of particular importance in the context of the programme. The fact that the biggest increase of resources is foreseen for subprogramme 1, Right to development, research and analysis, was welcomed.

352. Concern was expressed that economic, social and cultural rights were not sufficiently and appropriately addressed.

353. It was noted with concern that the resources proposed for activities related to development are not commensurate with the needs and requirements for full implementation of all mandates in that area.

354. Concern was expressed that answers to questions raised during the debate were not comprehensive, clear and sufficient in all cases and did not facilitate deliberations on this matter. Appreciation was expressed to the representative of the Secretary-General for the exhaustive information provided.

355. The view was expressed that resources for activities related to future mandates of the Economic and Social Council cannot be included in the proposed programme budget since this is in contravention of General Assembly resolution 41/213 of 19 December 1986. In this regard, General Assembly resolution 52/220 of 22 December 1997, in particular paragraph 79, and also resolution 44/201 B of 21 December 1989 were recalled.

356. It was noted with concern that some activities had been included without any legislative mandate by the General Assembly. In this context, the inclusion of the elaboration of development indicators was also noted with concern.

357. Concern was expressed over the significant increase of resources for the human rights programme, including the proposed establishment of seven new Professional posts, the highest staffing proposal compared to other sections of the programme budget.

358. The view was expressed that too much emphasis had been placed on human rights at the international level, but that the synergy of human rights at the international and national levels was not sufficiently highlighted. Concern was expressed that the civil and political rights were not adequately addressed. The view was expressed that more detailed information regarding special procedures of the Commission on Human Rights, especially the number of special rapporteurs, independent experts and working groups, should be

included in the budget document. The view was also expressed that these activities should be adequately funded in the budget.

359. The view was expressed that the activities regarding the World Conference against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance should be more emphasized and that reference should also be made to the regional preparatory meetings.

360. The view was expressed that the integration of human rights components in the United Nations Development Assistance Frameworks might lead to objective and/or biased actions, which would deprive developing countries of the right to development in a different form.

361. Concern was expressed about the inclusion in the narrative on expected accomplishments of subprogramme 2 of an increase in the number of States parties to the human rights treaties and in the number of ratifications. The view was expressed that the decision on ratification as well as on rationalization and adaptation of the human rights machinery at the national level was the prerogative of individual sovereign countries rather than an initiative taken by the departments concerned.

362. The view was expressed that resources had been included in the proposal for activities not yet mandated. It was suggested that they would alternatively be better financed under the contingency fund after mandates had been confirmed by the Economic and Social Council.

363. The view was expressed that the explanations regarding the non-inclusion of resources for the Committee on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families should be couched in a more positive way. This would avoid giving the impression that a judgement had already been made that the Convention would not enter into force in the biennium 2000–2001. The view was also expressed that more details on the activities of the Special Rapporteur on the rights of migrants should be included in the narrative. It was also suggested that the programme should be revised to reflect the discussions taken by the fifty-fifth session of the Commission on Human Rights.

364. Concern was expressed about the necessity to provide translation services to the special thematic rapporteurs so that they can consider the information given to them by Governments in different languages and ensure the incorporation of such information in their reports.

365. Concern was expressed that neither the Human Rights Centre in Africa nor the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights were mentioned in the narrative.

366. The authenticity of allegations and sources for the allegations received by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights was questioned.

367. The view was expressed that the inclusion in the section of activities related to human rights indicators (para. 22.49 (b) (iii)) and the preparation of new standards (para. 22.47) was not mandated by intergovernmental organs.

368. The view was expressed that the reference to "Paris-principles institutions" in paragraph 22.75 and to "integration of human rights components in the United Nations Development Assistance Frameworks" in paragraph 22.79 (c) (i), should be deleted. The view was expressed that paragraph 22.49 (b) (iii) should also be deleted.

369. Concern was expressed that there was no strategy elaborated for the implementation of the right to development and that no research and analytical studies on economic rights and on poverty and human rights had been carried out under any of the subprogrammes. Appreciation of the clear strategy of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights regarding the right to development was expressed.

Conclusions and recommendations

370. The Committee recommended that the General Assembly approve the programme narrative of section 22, Human rights, of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2000–2001 with the following modifications:

(a) In the first sentence of paragraph 22.1, after the words "realization of", the word "all" should be added;

(b) In the second sentence of paragraph 22.1, after the words "the programme is based on", the phrase "the revised medium-term plan for the period 1998–2001 (A/53/6/Rev.1)" should be added;

(c) Paragraph 22.5 should be deleted;

(d) Paragraph 22.26 should be replaced with the following sentence: "Resource requirements for the Committee on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families in 2000–2001 will be submitted when the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families enters into force";

(e) In the first sentence of paragraph 22.45, the words "The activities will focus on" should be replaced by "The primary objectives of this subprogramme will include promotion and protection of the right to development. In this regard the activities will be";

(f) In the first sentence of paragraph 22.48, the word "implementation" should be replaced with the words "promotion and protection of";

(g) In the last line of paragraph 22.49 (c) (i), after "ICRC", the words ", OIC, OAU and OAS" should be inserted.

371. The Committee recommended that the General Assembly carefully consider the narrative of paragraph 22.49 (b) (iii), bearing in mind the ongoing consideration of the issues contained in that paragraph.

Section 23. Protection of and assistance to refugees

372. At its 30th meeting, on 23 June 1999, the Committee for Programme and Coordination considered section 23, Protection of and assistance to refugees, of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2000–2001 (A/54/6 (Sect. 23)).

373. The representative of the Secretary-General introduced the budget section and responded to queries raised during the Committee's consideration of the document.

Discussion

374. Support was expressed for the programme of work under this section.

375. Particular emphasis was placed on the importance of providing assistance to women and children refugees. The view was expressed that countries receiving refugees should receive adequate assistance.

376. Concern was expressed regarding the reduced level of extrabudgetary resources projected to be available during the biennium 2000–2001 and the negative impact that such reduction would have on the assistance to refugees, in particular new refugees in Kosovo. The view was expressed that there should be no discriminatory treatment of refugees in the world.

377. The view was expressed that the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) should continue to pay particular attention to the situation of refugees in Africa.

378. The view was expressed that the change by UNHCR to a unified budget for its voluntarily funded programmes, with its emphasis on performance-based principles, was welcome.

379. The view was expressed that more precise language with definitive indicators was necessary so that a meaningful assessment of UNHCR performance could be made at the end of the biennium.

Conclusions and recommendations

380. The Committee recommended that on the basis of the principle of international burden-sharing and solidarity, the level of humanitarian assistance to host countries for the care and maintenance of refugees should be proportionate with the number of refugees they are hosting. In this regard, due attention shall be given to the prolonged presence of refugees, in particular in the developing countries.

381. The Committee stressed that the most durable solution to refugee problems is voluntary and safe repatriation to their countries of origin.

382. The Committee recommended that the Secretary-General revise the programme narrative of section 23, Protection of and assistance to refugees, to take fully into account General Assembly resolution 52/220 of 22 December 1997 (Sect. III, para. 82).

383. The Committee recommended that the General Assembly approve the programme narrative of section 23, Protection of and assistance to refugees, of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2000–2001.

Section 24. Palestine refugees

384. At its 29th meeting, on 23 June 1999, the Committee for Programme and Coordination considered section 24, Palestine refugees, of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2000–2001 (A/54/6 (Sect. 24)).

385. The representative of the Secretary-General introduced the budget section and responded to queries raised during the Committee's consideration thereof.

Discussion

386. Support was expressed for the programme of work under the section.

387. The need for the international community to continue to provide assistance to the Palestine refugees through the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) was emphasized.

388. UNRWA's role in empowering women under its small-scale enterprise programme was commended and concern was expressed about the reduction in university scholarships awarded to refugee students owing to reduced contributions.

389. It was stressed that the realization of a just, comprehensive and long-lasting solution to the problem of Palestine refugees is of paramount importance for the alleviation of the plight of the Palestine refugees.

390. Concern was expressed that the level of resources from the regular budget would remain unchanged during the next biennium. It was noted that the proposed increase in

voluntary contributions was somewhat optimistic in view of the difficulties for UNRWA to mobilize such resources.

391. Appreciation for the support given by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and the World Health Organization (WHO) in providing educational and health services to the Palestine refugees was expressed.

392. The view was expressed that the expected accomplishments included in this section were too vague and general to enable any credible assessment of the programme performance at the end of the biennium. The view was also expressed that the formulation of expected accomplishments in some activities is not feasible.

Conclusions and recommendations

393. The Committee recommended that the General Assembly approve the programme narrative of section 24, Palestine refugees, of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2000–2001.

Section 25. Humanitarian assistance

394. At its 29th meeting, on 23 June 1999, the Committee for Programme and Coordination considered section 25, Humanitarian assistance, of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2000–2001 (A/54/6 (Sect. 25)).

395. The representative of the Secretary-General introduced the budget section and responded to queries raised during the Committee's consideration thereof.

Discussion

396. Support was given to the activities undertaken by the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA). The Committee noted the importance of the programme of work and recalled the high priority given to humanitarian assistance in the medium-term plan for the period 1998–2001.

397. It was also noted that the proposed programme budget reflected adjustments made in the structure of the Office with a view to enhancing the role of the Inter-Agency Standing Committee and relocating some functions to the United Nations Office at Geneva. It was noted that the advantages of the Office at Geneva were its time-zone and proximity to the operational agencies and to the regions where the activities in the field of humanitarian assistance are being carried out.

398. Concern was expressed about the balance between regular budget and extrabudgetary resources and about the use of extrabudgetary resources to finance core activities, which should be funded from the regular budget.

399. It was also noted that the results of the International Decade for Natural Disaster Reduction will be reported to the Economic and Social Council in July 1999, as the decade will end this year. Subject to the decisions of the General Assembly, activities carried out under subprogramme 3, Natural disaster reduction, will continue during the biennium 2000–2001.

400. Views were expressed on the importance of early warning of natural disasters and humanitarian emergencies, as well as the need for timely response to disasters and emergencies that have humanitarian consequences. Support was expressed for strengthening early warning mechanisms.

401. The view was expressed that the programme of work seemed to be somewhat ambitious for the level of budgetary resources proposed for the year 2000–2001. Efforts should be

made therefore, for better coordination of activities with other United Nations players. In this connection, it was also noted that the Inter-Agency Standing Committee database on humanitarian policy initiatives was set up to avoid duplication of policy and functions among the United Nations agencies.

402. The view was also expressed that the existence of extrabudgetary posts may not be automatically recognized as a justification for the establishment of new posts funded by regular budgetary funds.

403. With respect to the narratives of expected accomplishments under the programme of work, the view was expressed that efforts should be made to define measures for the expected accomplishments in order to facilitate objective assessment.

Conclusions and recommendations

404. The Committee recommended that the General Assembly approve the programme narrative of section 25, Humanitarian assistance, of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2000–2001, subject to the following modifications:

(a) In the sixth line of paragraph 25.6, the words "notably the Security Council" should be deleted;

(b) Paragraph 25.34 (a) (iii) should be renumbered and placed under subparagraph 25.34 (c).

405. The Committee noted that the provision of a grant from the regular budget of the United Nations to the United Nations Development Programme, as recommended in the report of the Secretary-General on methods of financing activities for natural disaster mitigation, prevention and preparedness beyond the biennium 1998–1999 (A/53/641), in connection with the divested activities for disaster mitigation has not yet been adopted by the General Assembly.

Section 26. Public information

406. At its 31st meeting, on 23 June 1999, the Committee for Programme and Coordination considered section 26, Public information, of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2000–2001 (A/54/6 (Sect. 26)).

407. The representative of the Secretary-General introduced the budget section and responded to queries raised during the Committee's consideration of the budget section.

Discussion

408. Importance was attached to the public information activities of the Organization. It was emphasized that public information activities were an integral part of the strategic management of the Organization and the dissemination of information on the work of the United Nations throughout the world was considered extremely important. It was underscored that a well-coordinated information strategy was required in order to achieve a wider and effective outreach.

409. The view was expressed that the programme narrative could be better harmonized with the text of the medium-term plan. Views were also expressed that the important role played by the United Nations information centres should have been better reflected in the description of the programme of work.

410. While the inclusion of the expected accomplishments and the efforts being made in that respect were welcomed, views were expressed that they were broad and vague and required refinement and clarity. Views were also expressed that expected accomplishments

should be formulated in such a manner that their fulfilment would be measurable. The view was also expressed that the formulation of expected accomplishments might not be feasible for some of the activities implemented by the Department. The importance of clearly identifying end-users was stressed. The view was also expressed that self-evaluation was an important tool and that such evaluations should be carried out in accordance with the Regulations and Rules Governing Programme Planning, the Programme Aspects of the Budget, Monitoring of Implementation and the Methods of Evaluation, which require self-evaluation and identification of activities which are inefficient, ineffective or irrelevant.

411. The Committee noted with concern the modest increase in the level of resources, bearing in mind the report of the Office of Internal Oversight Services on evaluation (E/AC.51/1999/4) on the inability of the Department of Public Information to implement all mandated activities because of the lack of resources. It was also noted that the resources under the section might not be enough to fully implement the programme during the biennium.

412. Concern was also expressed on the decrease in resources for the United Nations information centres.

413. Emphasis was given to the importance of the public information activities in the field and views were expressed in support of the strengthening of the role of the information centres. It was also stressed that the integration exercise should be undertaken on a case-by-case basis, without affecting the important role of the information centres and in accordance with General Assembly resolution 52/220 of 22 December 1997. In this context, it was noted with concern that some mandates and activities of the information centres had not been implemented. The view was expressed that the integration of information centres with regional offices of other United Nations programmes should be further promoted.

414. It was noted with concern that resources allocated for information activities related to special conferences under paragraph 26.140 did not include the Fourth United Nations Conference to Review All Aspects of Multilaterally Agreed Equitable Principles and Rules for the Control of Restrictive Business Practices. The view was expressed that resources for that activity should be allocated under this section.

415. Concern was also expressed that the new structure indicated for the Department was not clearly justified in relation to specific mandates.

416. The success of the United Nations Web site was noted. While the increased use of advanced electronic communication, including the Internet, was welcomed and supported, views were expressed that, given the level of technological development in developing countries, emphasis should continue to be given to the traditional forms of mass media, including radio, television and print media, in order to reach a wider audience in the developing countries. It was noted that, despite the fast development of electronic communication technology, this form of communication was not accessible to a major portion of the world population, particularly in developing countries.

417. Concern was expressed that some of the promotional material and publications were produced only in a few official languages and views were expressed that such publications should be produced in the six official languages and widely disseminated. The view was expressed that the number of languages of radio programmes should be expanded. Concern was also expressed about the discontinuation of some useful publications, such as *Everyone's United Nations*, and about the delay in bringing the *UN Yearbook* up to date.

418. Support was expressed for closer cooperation between the Department of Public Information and the general public, as well as with the media.

419. Concern was expressed concerning the effectiveness of producing near verbatim summaries of meetings as press releases.

420. The view was expressed that the activities carried out by the Office of External Relations under section 1 might duplicate or overlap the activities and functions already carried out by the Department of Public Information.

421. The view was expressed that references to the conclusions and recommendations in the report of the Joint Inspection Unit, as outlined in table 26.28, should be deleted.

Conclusions and recommendations

422. The Committee recommended that the General Assembly approve the programme narrative of section 26, Public information, subject to the modification in paragraph 26.4 where the words "all Member States" should be replaced by "the peoples of the world".

423. In line with the designation of the year 2001 as the United Nations Year of Dialogue among Civilizations, by General Assembly resolution 53/22 of 4 November 1998, the Committee welcomed the efforts of the Department of Public Information to strengthen its capacity to disseminate information on and to draw international attention to the dialogue among civilizations with a view to promoting mutual understanding, tolerance, peaceful coexistence and international cooperation.

Section 27. Administrative services

424. At its 32nd meeting, on 24 June 1999, the Committee for Programme and Coordination considered section 27, Administrative services, of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2000–2001 (A/54/6 (Sect. 27)). It had before it the proposed programme budget in respect of subsections 27A, Office of the Under-Secretary-General for Management; 27B, Office of Programme Planning, Budget and Accounts; 27C, Office of Human Resources Management; 27D, Office of Central Support Services; 27E, Administration, Geneva; 27F, Administration, Vienna; and 27G, Administration, Nairobi.

425. The representative of the Secretary-General introduced the budget section and responded to queries raised during the Committee's consideration of the document, indicating that the Department of Management would continue the implementation of the Secretary-General's reform of the management of the United Nations. Furthermore, he indicated that the focus of the work for the next biennium would be on strengthening of management, periodic financial reporting and performance monitoring functions. High priority would be given to the effective and coherent exercise of management functions, the establishment and maintenance of clear lines of responsibility and accountability and enhancement of the responsiveness of the Secretariat to the changing and growing needs of the Organization.

426. The attention of the Committee was drawn to the diversity of work of the Department of Management, activities of which included the management of financial resources, human resources and support operations. Those services provided the backbone for the efficient and effective functioning of the work of the Organization, and efficient administrative services paved the way for the useful and timely delivery of outputs and services to Member States. It was indicated that efficiency measures would continue to be undertaken to streamline functions, simplify processes and procedures and modernize services, especially through expanded use of information technology. Furthermore, the Secretariat would continue the progressive investment in training of staff and development of substantive skills, as well as its efforts to provide for a secure and safe working environment.

Discussion

427. Support was expressed for the proposed programme of work of the Department of Management and the level and allocation of resources proposed for the biennium 2000–2001 under section 27. The view was expressed that the Department of Management was playing an important role in the implementation of resolutions 52/12 A and B of 12 November and 19 December 1997 and 52/220 of 22 December 1997, streamlining the organizational structure of the Secretariat, strengthening the accountability of programme managers and staff and increasing the efficiency of the Secretariat. Support was also expressed for the efforts by the Department to identify efficiency savings to be reallocated for economic and social development through the Development Account. Appreciation was expressed to the secretariats of the Committee and the Fifth Committee and the staff of the Department of Management for their services and the assistance provided to both Committees.

428. The view was expressed that the format of section 27 of the proposed programme budget should be harmonized with that of other budget sections.

429. With regard to section 27A, Office of the Under-Secretary-General for Management, the view was expressed that the programme narrative should have spelt out more clearly the measures taken to implement resolution 53/207 of 18 December 1998, in particular with respect to the responsibilities of the secretariat of the Committee for Programme and Coordination for the timely submission of documentation. The view was expressed that the General Assembly should consider, at its fifty-fourth session, the issue of all additional human and other resources required to strengthen the secretariat of the Committee, taking into account its increasing workload and responsibilities, in accordance with paragraphs 356 and 369 of part one of its report.[5]

430. The view was expressed that there was a lack of justification and evidence regarding the increase in the workload and responsibilities of the secretariat of the Committee for Programme and Coordination.

431. With regard to section 27C, Office of Human Resources Management, support was expressed for the proposed programme of work and level of resources, in particular under training programmes. However, it was indicated that training should be job-related, and, in this regard, it was suggested to replace the notion of continuous learning with upgrading of job-related skills. The importance of comprehensive evaluation of all training programmes, as had been recommended by the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions, was stressed. Efforts made to ensure that consultants and experts did not replace staff members were noted. It was stressed that the Office of Human Resources Management should be more active in recruitment of staff from unrepresented and under-represented countries and in resolving geographical and gender imbalances in the Secretariat, in particular with regard to high-level posts. It was stressed that emphasis should be placed on staff mobility, as well as security and safety of staff in the field. With regard to the reform of the Office of Human Resources Management, the view was expressed that delegation of authority should be accompanied by a system of control and accountability. The view was expressed that section 27C still needed more improvement from the point of view of concise and focused descriptions of activities and objectives to be implemented. It was stated with concern that the introduction to section 27C did not fully reflect the relevant programme of the medium-term plan. Concern was expressed about the appropriateness of reference in the programme narrative to the activities of a Task Force for Human Resources Management Reform, as it had no General Assembly mandate, although the view was also expressed that this was within the purview of the Secretary-General. Concern was also expressed regarding the provision of paragraph 22 of section V of Assembly resolution 53/221 of 7 April 1999. The view was expressed that General Service staff of all nationalities

must be given equal opportunities to be promoted to the Professional category through the G-to-P examinations, and that the Assembly should keep this issue under review.

432. With regard to section 27D, Office of Common Support Services, the view was expressed that more concerted efforts should be pursued to expand further the common services arrangements with the United Nations funds and programmes and with the other organizations of the United Nations system, including such services in other United Nations locations. The view was expressed that the process of technological transformation of the Organization should be constantly coordinated in all locations, as well as with Member States, in order to avoid possible disruption of the intergovernmental processes owing to rapidly changing working methods and procedures resulting from technological innovations.

433. With regard to section 27G, Administration, Nairobi, while the proposals for reorganization and strengthening of that duty station in response to resolution 52/220 were commended, the view was expressed that full coordination of such efforts with the governing bodies of the United Nations Environment Programme and the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat) was advisable to avoid any negative impact on programme implementation. The view was expressed that the United Nations Office at Nairobi should be treated on a par with other United Nations offices, such as those at Geneva and Vienna, and should be provided with full conference services.

434. The view was also expressed that the current level of General Service staff should be reviewed in view of various measures taken to reduce the workload.

435. With regard to the inclusion in the proposed programme budget of recommendations of the Office of Internal Oversight Services, concern was expressed that those recommendations had not yet been reviewed by the General Assembly. The view was also expressed that the inclusion of those recommendations was in full compliance with decisions of the Assembly.

436. The view was expressed that the Committee for Programme and Coordination should limit the time given to the consideration of this section as it was not a substantive programme.

Conclusions and recommendations

437. The Committee emphasized that the responsibilities and workload of the secretariat of the Committee for Programme and Coordination, which also serves as the secretariat of the Fifth Committee, should have been clearly spelled out in the programme narrative, in accordance with paragraphs 356 and 369 of part one of its report.[1]

438. The Committee recommended that the General Assembly continue consideration of this issue in its fifty-fourth session, in accordance with paragraphs 8 and 9 of section 1B of its resolution 52/220.

439. The Committee recommended to the General Assembly that it request the Secretary-General to reformulate the narrative of section 27C in accordance with its resolution 53/221. The revised narrative should be submitted to the Assembly for consideration at its fifty-fourth session.

440. The Committee recommended that future programme narratives proposed under section 27 should better reflect the accomplishments to be achieved, in accordance with the Regulations and Rules Governing Programme Planning, the Programme Aspects of the Budget, the Monitoring of Implementation and the Methods of Evaluation.

441. **The Committee decided to recommend to the General Assembly approval of the programme narrative of sections 27A, B, D, E, F and G, Administrative services, subject to the following modification in paragraph 27A.27 (d) (iii): reference should be included to the reports of the Joint Inspection Unit.**

Section 28. Internal oversight

442. At its 33rd meeting, on 24 June 1999, the Committee for Programme and Coordination considered section 28, Internal oversight, of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2000–2001 (A/54/6 (Sect. 28)).

443. The representative of the Secretary-General introduced the budget section and responded to queries raised during the Committee's consideration of the document.

Discussion

444. Support was expressed for the programme of work and functions of the Office. Satisfaction was expressed for the contribution of the Office's work to the reform efforts of the Secretary-General and improvements for the efficient and effective use of resources in the United Nations. Doubts were expressed about the real contribution of the Office to the improvement of the efficient and effective use of resources in the United Nations. The view was also expressed that attention should be paid to the structure of the Office to avoid its becoming too complex and weighty.

445. The objectives and outputs were noted, and the inclusion of expected accomplishments in the proposed programme budget was welcomed. However, concern was expressed regarding the connection between the activities described and how progress towards attainment of the expected accomplishments would be measured.

446. The view was expressed that an increase in the level of resources was needed. The view was also expressed that the Office should set an example by demonstrating how savings can be effectively achieved. Clarification was sought on whether the level of resources would allow the Office to now reach its "cruising speed". Further, concern was expressed at the increase in the level of resources for consultants and travel. The view was also expressed that the Office should not rely heavily on external consultants and experts to perform internal oversight functions and that these resources should be managed in a more economical manner. Concern was also expressed regarding the increase in the level of resources for the section, taking into account the fact that internal oversight is not a priority in the medium-term plan.

447. Concern was expressed at the distribution of resources among the four subprogrammes and the need to balance these resources vis-à-vis the programme of work. The view was expressed that there was a need to avoid duplication among the four subprogrammes. It was noted that priority was being given to the audit and management consulting programme, and that audit activities were core functions of the Office. The introduction of audit cycles of three to four years, in accordance with internal audit standards, was welcomed, and support was expressed for the horizontal and thematic approach, which would lead to greater cohesion among the United Nations offices.

448. The question of the qualifications of the Office's personnel was raised, and the view was expressed that auditors recruited should possess the necessary skills to appropriately perform the functions.

449. The initiative of the Office to coordinate and cooperate with external oversight bodies, as well as with the funds and programmes of the United Nations, was welcomed. However,

the view was expressed with regret that this was not adequately reflected in the programme of work.

450. Appreciation was expressed for the activities of the Central Evaluation Unit and for the further refining of the work of the Central Monitoring and Inspection Unit. The view was expressed that these two subprogrammes were beneficial to both the United Nations and Member States. However, it was noted that the units should not just provide guidelines for programme managers, but should also play a greater and more active role in the self-evaluation and monitoring processes of the Organization's departments. In addition, the issue of the timing of evaluation reports provided by the Central Evaluation Unit was raised, and clarification was sought as to whether it was coherent or was determined on the basis of the resources available to the Unit.

451. With regard to the Investigations Section, the view was expressed that it was difficult to measure in advance the workload of the Section. However, a question was raised regarding the effectiveness of the Section in serving as a deterrent, as the number of cases had continued to increase over the past four and one half years. The view was expressed that the deterrent role of internal oversight should have led to a decrease in the number of cases. The view was also expressed that the Investigations Section should not only be reactive but should also be proactive in addressing misuse of United Nations resources.

452. Appreciation was expressed to the Under-Secretary-General for Internal Oversight for the work accomplished by his Office under his leadership.

Conclusions and recommendations

453. The Committee recommended that the General Assembly approve the programme narrative of section 28, Internal oversight, subject to the following modifications:

(a) Paragraph 28.3 should be replaced with:

"28.3 In its programme of work for the biennium 2000–2001, OIOS will manage the responsibilities of each oversight unit within the Office to ensure coherence and in order to assist the Secretary-General in fulfilling his internal oversight responsibilities in respect of resources and staff of the Organization through the exercise of the functions enumerated in resolution 48/218 B."

(b) Paragraph 28.20 should be replaced with:

"28.20 The objectives of the subprogramme are:

"(a) To facilitate the assessment by intergovernmental bodies, as systematically as possible, of the relevance, efficiency, effectiveness and impact of the activities of programmes in relation to their objectives;

"(b) To enable the Secretariat and Member States to engage in systematic reflection with a view to increasing the effectiveness of the main programmes of the Organization by altering their content and, if necessary, reviewing their objectives;

"(c) To assist the departments and offices in the Secretariat in implementing approved evaluation recommendations;

"(d) To support the evaluation activities of departments and offices.";

(c) Paragraph 28.24 should be replaced with:

"28.4 The expected accomplishments by the end of the biennium consist of increases in the implementation of approved recommendations contained in

evaluation reports and strengthening the role of self-evaluation within the Organizations.";

(d) The two first sentences of paragraph 28.41 should be replaced with:

"In its programme of work for the biennium 2000–2001, the Division plans to consolidate its resources to provide comprehensive internal audit coverage. The Division will deliver the following outputs during the biennium:".

Section 29. Jointly financed administrative activities

454. At its 36th meeting, on 25 June 1999, the Committee considered section 29, Jointly financed administrative activities, of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2000–2001 (A/54/6 (Sect. 29)).

455. The budget section was introduced by the representative of the Secretary-General, who responded to queries raised during the Committee's consideration of the budget section.

Discussion

456. The programme narrative proposed under section 29 was noted. The view was expressed that this budget section, like others, should have included information on expected accomplishments to be achieved in the course of the programme implementation.

457. The view was expressed that the methodology applied for the presentation of activities proposed under section 29 was at variance with the approach taken with respect to other budget sections and that the approach should be unified. The view was also expressed that the activities proposed under this budget section had a limited programmatic content, owing to a shared responsibility of the United Nations for the funding of the proposed activities.

Conclusions and recommendations

458. The Committee took note of the narrative of section 29, Jointly financed administrative activities, of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2000–2001.

Section 31. Construction, alteration, improvement and major maintenance

459. At its 36th meeting, on 25 June 1999, the Committee for Programme and Coordination considered section 31, Construction, alteration, improvement and major maintenance, of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2000–2001 (A/54/6 (Sect. 31)).

460. The representative of the Secretary-General introduced the budget section and responded to queries raised during the Committee's consideration of the document.

Discussion

461. An expression of support was made for the programme of work proposed for the biennium 2000–2001 under section 31. The view was expressed that periodic evaluation of the physical conditions of the United Nations facilities and their timely maintenance and renovation was essential in order to provide for the normal working conditions of delegations and staff. Concern was expressed that delay in the renovation and repair of deteriorating facilities, structures and systems, and a reduction in the level of resources experienced in the past under this budget section, had substantial implications for the Organization and appeared to be wasteful in the long run. The view was expressed that the programme narrative should have indicated, with respect to individual projects proposed under the

programme, possible implications for the Organization in cases where implementation of those projects could be delayed owing to insufficient funding or reduction of resources.

462. The need for a long-term programme for capital improvements and upgrading of the facilities was emphasized. In this context, the view was expressed that the capital master plan, along with proposals for its implementation, should be submitted by the Secretariat to the General Assembly for its review.

463. The view was expressed that priority should be given to the multi-year abatement programme for asbestos-containing materials during the biennium 2000–2001.

464. The view was expressed that the Fifth Committee of the General Assembly and the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions were the proper organs for review of the proposed programme budget under this budget section.

Conclusions and recommendations

465. The Committee recommended that the General Assembly approve the programme narrative proposed under section 31, Construction, alteration, improvement and major maintenance, of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2000–2001.

Section 33. Development account

466. At its 36th meeting, on 25 June 1999, the Committee considered section 33, Development account, of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2000–2001 (A/54/6 (Sect. 33)).

467. The representative of the Secretary-General introduced the budget section and responded to queries raised during the Committee's consideration of the budget section.

Discussion

468. It was noted that the General Assembly had yet to approve modalities for the operation of the development account. It was noted with regret that the budget section did not contain a detailed programme of work for the biennium 2000–2001, as required by the Regulations and Rules Governing Programme Planning, the Programme Aspects of the Budget, the Monitoring of Implementation and the Methods of Evaluation. However, the view was also expressed that it would not have been appropriate to submit a programme of work before there was agreement on the modalities for operating the development account.

469. The view was expressed that project proposals envisaged for the biennium 1998–1999 should have been submitted for the approval of the Committee in 1998 rather than to the Economic and Social Council. The view was also expressed that proposals identifying future efficiency measures should be submitted to Member States before the General Assembly approved the modalities for the operation of the development account.

470. The view was expressed that section 33 should be omitted from the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2000–2001 and that the proposed budget for this section should be submitted separately as soon as the General Assembly had decided on the modalities for the operation of the development account.

Conclusions and recommendations

471. The Committee noted that the programme narrative for the utilization of the amount approved for the development account had not been submitted.

472. The Committee recommended that the General Assembly request the Secretary-General to submit the proposals for the utilization of the development account to the Assembly at its fifty-fourth session.

C. Evaluation

1. In-depth evaluation of the programme on disarmament

473. At its 3rd, 5th and 6th meetings, on 7, 8 and 9 June 1999, the Committee considered the report of the Office of Internal Oversight Services on the in-depth evaluation of the programme on disarmament transmitted to it under cover of a note by the Secretary-General (E/AC.51/1999/2).

474. The representative of the Secretary-General introduced the report and responded to queries raised during the Committee's consideration of the report.

Discussion

475. The Committee expressed its appreciation for the high quality of the report. As a result of the elaboration of the report and the consultation inherent to the process of internal oversight, the useful interaction prior to the preparation of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2000–2001 to cope with the findings of the Office of Internal Oversight Services was noted.

476. Representatives considered that the programme was of high priority. The decrease of resources available to it throughout the period under review raised concerns; the financial situation did not reflect the priority given to the programme by the General Assembly. It was noted that the fellowship programme, publications and the regional centres for peace and disarmament, in particular, had been affected by resource constraints. It was observed that funding the activities of the regional centres through voluntary contributions was not a satisfactory arrangement. The view was expressed that the report should have included a recommendation on support for the regional centres.

477. Information was requested on the impact of the 1997 reorganization, assigning the responsibility of secretariat support to two different departments, the Department of General Assembly Affairs and Conference Services and the Department for Disarmament Affairs.

478. On the subject of mandated follow-up actions regarding multilateral disarmament agreements, it was recalled that it was the sovereign right of a State to decide whether it wished to sign and ratify an international agreement, and, in this regard, the United Nations Secretariat could only provide technical advice, if requested by a Member State. In respect of the promotion of ratification by the Secretariat, it was noted that the response of Member States to appeals by the Secretary-General was positive, and the view was expressed that he should take more of such initiatives in favour of disarmament. The view was expressed that verification activities were only a small part of the issue of treaty implementation.

479. The view was expressed that the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research (UNIDIR) was playing a useful role in carrying out independent research and that the Department for Disarmament Affairs should avoid duplicating its work. The view was expressed that budgetary support to UNIDIR should increase. It was observed that the regular budget appropriations should not be used to fund independent institutes.

480. Representatives who had participated in the fellowship programme confirmed the good performance of the programme as evaluated in the report. The view was expressed that ways should be found to strengthen the fellowship programme.

481. Regarding the participation of non-governmental organizations in the work of the United Nations, it was recalled that the deliberative and negotiating functions of the multilateral disarmament machinery were the prerogative of Governments. In this respect, it was also recalled that the participation of non-governmental organizations was encouraged by Member States and took the form of contributions to data banks and information made available to delegations, as well as exchange of views with government representatives in formal and informal forums.

482. The Committee noted that, since 1992, because of budgetary constraints, the number of publications produced by the disarmament programme had been reduced. The view was expressed that the trend of discontinuing publications was regrettable. The Committee stressed the importance of *The United Nations Disarmament Yearbook* for the work of government representatives.

483. The view was expressed that the decision of the Secretariat to discontinue publications that duplicated those published elsewhere was a positive step, and that, in general, the programme should focus on areas where there was demonstrated need. The need to enhance the dissemination of information was recognized.

484. The view was expressed that the evaluation should have included not only the achievements in the field of disarmament but also the failures and shortcomings.

485. The view was also expressed that reference should have been made in paragraph 8 of the report to:

(a) The decision taken by the Conference on Disarmament on the establishment of an ad hoc committee to negotiate, on the basis of the report of the Special Coordinator (CD/1299) and the mandate contained therein, a non-discriminatory, multilateral and internationally and effectively verifiable treaty banning the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices;

(b) The failure of the Conference on Disarmament to establish an ad hoc committee on nuclear disarmament.

486. With regard to section V.D, on an integrated approach to peace and security, the view was expressed that the Secretariat should use those concepts which enjoyed consensus.

487. In the course of the debate, the following observations were made about the recommendations:

(a) *Recommendation 1*. It was stated that the Committee was not the appropriate forum in which to address budgetary issues. The view was expressed that the Committee had the mandate to address any matter related to the budget. The view was also expressed that, in accordance with the mandate of the Office of Internal Oversight Services established in General Assembly resolution 48/218 B, the Office should not make budgetary recommendations. It was noted that the evaluation report had been drafted before the preparation of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2000–2001.

(b) *Recommendation 2*. Reservations were made on the added value that the provision of additional information by the Department for Disarmament Affairs in reports submitted to the First Committee would offer.

(c) *Recommendation 3 (b)*. It was stated that paragraph 114 of the Final Document of the Tenth Special Session of the General Assembly did not provide a mandate for the activity envisaged in this recommendation. It was also observed that the Department for Disarmament Affairs did not have any mandate to facilitate the exchange of experience between treaty implementing bodies.

(d) *Recommendation 4*. It was stated that requests for studies and technical information should follow the appropriate procedures in place.

(e) *Recommendation 6*. The view was expressed that, while the Department for Disarmament Affairs should be given access to the databases of other Secretariat departments, there was no mandate for providing the Department with access to databases being maintained by organizations like IAEA, the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons and the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization. In most cases, there were strict confidentiality rules covering the data available to those organizations. Any such proposal would need to be cleared by the First Committee, the General Assembly and the appropriate organs of other international organizations concerned.

(f) *Recommendation 7 (b)*. It was stated that the Department for Disarmament Affairs did not have any mandate to maintain institutionalized working-level contacts with other organizations involved in disarmament-related programmes. Such a programme would have to obtain approval from the First Committee and the General Assembly, the Conference of States Parties to the Chemical Weapons Convention, the General Conference of IAEA, etc. Even after mandates were obtained, the process would need to be under some kind of intergovernmental oversight mechanism.

(g) *Recommendation 8*. It was stated that new measures for the dissemination of information should be well targeted, and should include performance indicators and regular evaluations. The view was expressed that the involvement of the Advisory Board on Disarmament Matters in the formulation of an information strategy was not required.

Conclusions and recommendations

488. The Committee expressed concern at the late issuance of the report and emphasized that such reports should be submitted in accordance with the six-week rule in future.

489. The Committee reiterated the importance that Member States attach to the programme, which is one of the eight priority areas of work of the Organization identified by the General Assembly in the medium-term plan for the period 1998–2001.

490. The Committee highlighted the importance of the regional centres for peace and disarmament. The Committee requested the Secretary-General to take appropriate action to strengthen the centres and make them more effective, so as to achieve their objectives.

491. The Committee emphasized that the resource proposals should be submitted only through established procedures to the relevant bodies, in accordance with the relevant regulations and rules and resolutions of the General Assembly.

492. The assistance provided to parties to multilateral agreements was noted with appreciation.

493. The Committee noted the importance of the participation of non-governmental organizations in the general debate in the disarmament forums. The Committee recalled that the deliberative and negotiating functions of the multilateral disarmament machinery were the prerogative of Governments.

494. The Committee was pleased with the good performance of the fellowship programme.

495. The Committee endorsed recommendations 4, 5 and 7 (a).

496. The Committee also recommended, in connection with recommendation 3 (a), that in keeping with existing legal provisions regarding the role of the Secretariat, and in collaboration with relevant treaty organizations and regional organizations, the Department for Disarmament Affairs should facilitate the exchange of information between interested States and undertake, at the request of Governments, advisory services and technical assistance relating to the ratification of disarmament treaties.

497. The Committee further recommended, in connection with recommendation 6, that arrangements be worked out between the Department for Disarmament Affairs and the other relevant Secretariat departments to facilitate access by the Department to disarmament-related information contained in their databases.

2. In-depth evaluation of the electoral assistance programme

498. At its 2nd and 3rd meetings, on 7 June 1999, the Committee considered the report of the Office of Internal Oversight Services on the in-depth evaluation of United Nations electoral assistance, transmitted under cover of a note by the Secretary-General (E/AC.51/1999/3 and Corr.1).

499. The representative of the Secretary-General responded to queries raised during the Committee's consideration of the report.

Discussion

500. The view was expressed that the quality, scope and comprehensiveness of the report were satisfactory. The view was expressed that the report should have focused on the real work of the Organization on electoral assistance, instead of devoting too much time to the work and norms of other intergovernmental organizations on the matter.

501. Concerns and doubts were expressed with regard to the legislative mandate for changing, in the report, the priority of the electoral assistance programme without a clear mandate by the General Assembly. In this regard, it was recalled that, in the medium-term plan, it had been clearly stated that the main objective of this programme was to render electoral assistance to Member States upon request and in accordance with the relevant decisions of the Security Council and the General Assembly.

502. It was observed that there should be a clearer division of responsibilities among agencies of the United Nations system to avoid duplication of effort and overlapping responsibilities. It was stated that the role of the Electoral Assistance Division should focus on areas where the Division enjoyed a comparative advantage.

503. The view was expressed that the report did not sufficiently clarify the role played by the Division in providing assistance in the field, in contrast to the role played by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), which had been made clearer. The view was also expressed that there was a need to update the role that the Electoral Assistance Division should play in the light of the changing needs of countries.

504. The view was expressed that the Electoral Assistance Division should lead the United Nations electoral assistance activities and regrets were expressed regarding the long interregnum between the departure of the first Director of the Division, who retired in 1995, and the appointment of his successor in 1998. In this context, the role of the Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs as the United Nations focal point for electoral assistance activities was reaffirmed.

505. With respect to resources and funding, the view was expressed that electoral assistance activities initiated by the United Nations should be funded through the regular budget. It

was noted that the report failed to clarify how some electoral assistance activities were funded and gave the impression that the United Nations was funding them in their entirety. It was also pointed out that more information should be presented about the different types of electoral assistance given, especially when they were innovative.

506. Disappointment was expressed that, of the 68 countries that had received electoral assistance, only two were specifically mentioned as having been successful cases.

507. The scarcity of internal assessments used in the report was noted and it was suggested that, while external assessments could be used as background information, it was not appropriate to include these in the report.

508. In the course of the debate, the following observations and reservations were expressed concerning the recommendations:

Recommendation 1. Doubts were expressed as to whether the reference to post-election assistance was based on an accurate interpretation of the mandates. The role of the United Nations Development Programme was recalled. The view was expressed that the United Nations-United Nations Development Programme guidelines referred to in the report had not been approved by the General Assembly. The view was also expressed that there was no mandate defining specific functions of the Electoral Assistance Division when providing post-election assistance and that the issue was yet to be decided by the General Assembly.

Recommendation 2. Reservations were expressed on recommendation 2, since there were doubts about the mandate behind the proposals. The view was also expressed that implementation of recommendation 2 would restrict the activity of the Electoral Assistance Division.

Recommendation 2 (d). Support was expressed for the coordination and facilitation of lessons learned, but the use of the term "democratization activities" was questioned in reference to established mandates. It was pointed out that the experience of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations with respect to setting up a well-performing Lessons Learned Unit could be used as a model by the Electoral Assistance Division.

Recommendation 2 (f). While support was expressed for the mainstreaming of gender issues, the view was expressed that the matter should have been discussed more substantively in the context of electoral assistance.

Recommendation 2 (g). The view was expressed that extrabudgetary funds would be appropriate to fund certain activities, but that needs assessment missions should be funded through the regular budget. Concern was expressed that over-reliance on extrabudgetary funding might delay the democratization process in countries which could not attract sufficient voluntary contributions. The view was expressed that, given the importance of the electoral assistance programme, regular budget resources should be increased. The view was expressed that, in accordance with the mandate of the Office of Internal Oversight Services, which was established in resolution 48/218 B of 29 July 1994, the Office should not make budgetary recommendations.

Recommendation 3. Support was expressed for a broad agreement among the various offices and programmes involved in order to achieve an integrated approach to providing electoral assistance through a more streamlined and coherent division of responsibilities under the leadership of the Electoral Assistance Division. The view was also expressed that recommendation 3, in its present formulation, would lead to micro-management. The view was expressed that the agreement on the allocation of responsibilities within the United Nations should not cover procedures for handling requests by Member States.

Conclusions and recommendations

509. There was agreement in the Committee on the continued importance and relevance of the programme on electoral assistance.

510. In general, strong support was expressed for this subprogramme. It was recognized that the role of the Electoral Assistance Division was of great importance for the Organization, and that it had been successful in the 1990s in providing electoral assistance to countries undergoing their first round of elections.

511. The Committee recommended approval of recommendation 1, on the understanding that its implementation would be in accordance with subprogramme 1.3 of the medium-term plan.

512. The Committee recommended approval of recommendation 2 (a) to (d), (f) and (g), on the understanding that:

(a) With regard to 2 (d), lessons learned from democratization activities would be included only to the extent that those activities enjoyed mandates;

(b) Regarding 2 (g), over-reliance on extrabudgetary funding should be avoided to the extent possible.

513. The Committee recommended approval of recommendation 3, on the understanding that the allocation of respective responsibilities should be in accordance with the relevant provisions of the medium-term plan.

3. Triennial review of the implementation of the recommendations made by the Committee for Programme and Coordination at its thirty-sixth session on the evaluation of the Department of Public Information

514. At its 4th meeting, on 8 June 1999, the Committee considered the report of the Office of Internal Oversight Services on the triennial review of the implementation of the recommendations made by the Committee for Programme and Coordination at its thirty-sixth session on the evaluation of the Department of Public Information, transmitted under cover of a note by the Secretary-General (E/AC.51/1999/4).

515. The representative of the Secretary-General introduced the report and responded to questions raised during the Committee's consideration of the report.

Discussion

516. The Committee noted the efforts and progress of the Department of Public Information in implementing a number of recommendations made by the Committee three years previously. The view was expressed, however, that progress on many aspects of the work of the Department on which recommendations had been made was slow. It was noted that, during the past three years, public information activities had gone through a reorientation, and that more time was needed to assess the results of that reorientation.

517. Concern was expressed that the inadequacy of resources was the cause of a number of difficulties faced by the Department in implementing its activities, as identified in the report under consideration. In particular, it was noted that, because of the reduction in resources, many United Nations information centres could not play a meaningful role. The view was expressed that the report should have offered suggestions for remedial action in its conclusions and recommendations. Several representatives expressed the view that triennial reviews of the implementation of earlier recommendations of the Committee should adequately reflect new concerns due to new trends and developments that had arisen in the intervening three years.

518. On the overall strategy of the Department, and in respect to the work of its Strategic Communications Planning Group, it was stressed that the information goals and priorities the Department should follow were those enunciated by the General Assembly. The view was expressed that the coordination of the public information activities of the Secretariat needed to be improved, and that the Department should maintain more sustained contacts with other departments.

519. Support was expressed for innovations, such as those of the Dag Hammarskjöld Library. Use made by the Department of the Internet and the opportunities it offered for dissemination of information was welcomed. It was noted, however, that traditional media, such as printed material, should not be neglected as access to new technologies was not yet universal.

520. The efforts of the Department to pursue a more active way of using traditional media were noted. In particular, the continuing quality of *Africa Recovery* was commended. The view was expressed that the publication, with its well-defined target audience, offered a model for other departmental publications. Regarding radio broadcasting, it was noted that the development of a United Nations radio broadcasting capacity would necessitate funding. The representative of the Secretariat informed the Committee that funds were not currently available, in the regular budget or through extrabudgetary resources, and that the Department was approaching Member States for this purpose.

521. The Committee attaches importance to transparency and it expressed the view that ways should be found to facilitate access to United Nations officials by media organizations. In this respect, the Committee noted that the recommended Secretary-General's bulletin on disclosure of information had not yet been issued. It was stressed that the newly issued guidelines on disclosure of information should be specific and clear. Their implementation should not add a new layer of bureaucracy in the Secretariat.

522. It was observed that the timely issuance of information was a key question. It was noted that the development of a more effective news-gathering and delivery system was a positive step. Regret was expressed that existing practices impeding access by the visual media to activities of the United Nations had not been reviewed.

523. On the integration of information centres with the offices of resident coordinators, the risk of imposing an additional burden on resident coordinators and, as a result, compromising the effectiveness of information activities caused concern. Such integration should be done on a case-by-case basis. The view was also expressed that in selecting resident coordinators the additional role should be considered.

524. The Committee noted the efforts by the Publications Board with regard to the adoption of a policy requiring departments to establish mechanisms to enhance the quality of their publications. It was noted that, although quality control was still a concern, the Board had not considered a centralized policy of peer review to be feasible. Action by the Publications Board on a policy to monitor the quality of publications was seen as desirable, bearing in mind that the Board should facilitate the work of departments, and should not make their tasks more complicated, as recommended by the Committee at its thirty-eighth session.

Conclusions and recommendations

525. The Committee commended the report and the monitoring and follow-up activities of the Office of Internal Oversight Services that went into its preparation. The Committee was of the view that the report gave an accurate description of the uneven implementation of the recommendations made by the Committee at its thirty-

sixth session, and of the difficulties encountered by the Department, and had identified areas where progress was still needed.

526. The Committee stressed the importance it attached to the work of the Department of Public Information and the role it could play in presenting a positive image of the United Nations to the public.

527. The Committee recommended that recommendation 1 be implemented in full conformity with rule 101.2 (p) of the Staff Regulations and Rules.

528. The Committee endorsed recommendation 2, on the understanding that the quality of publications should continue to be improved, and that in this regard recommendation 2 should facilitate rather than control the publications.

529. The author departments must take primary responsibility for their outputs vis-à-vis substance, cost-effectiveness and relevance to mandates and should exercise that responsibility in accordance with the policy to be adopted by the Publications Board and in a way which ensured systematic quality control.

530. The Committee noted the importance of information centres and recommended that all efforts be made to ensure that the centres would play a meaningful communications role.

531. The Committee emphasized that programmes should be evaluated with a view to ensuring the efficiency and effectiveness of the implementation of the programmes and legislative mandates of the Organization. Analytical and critical evaluations of the implementation of programmes and legislative mandates should be carried out, examining whether changes therein required review of the methods of delivery, the continuing relevance of administrative procedures and whether the activities corresponded to the mandates as they might be reflected in the approved budgets and the medium-term plan. The recommendations in the evaluation studies should be strictly in accordance with the approved legislative mandates and regulations and rules of the Organization.

532. The Committee recognized the importance of publications in promoting the image of the United Nations and their usefulness for Member States and the public.

533. The Committee noted that the evaluation report of the Office of Internal Oversight Services, together with the recommendations of the Committee thereon, had not been submitted to the Committee on Information as had been recommended.

4. Triennial review of the implementation of the recommendations made by the Committee for Programme and Coordination at its thirty-sixth session on the evaluation of peacekeeping operations: termination phase

534. At its 2nd meeting, on 8 June 1999, the Committee considered the report of the Office of Internal Oversight Services on the triennial review of the implementation of the recommendations made by the Committee on Programme and Coordination at its thirty-sixth session on the evaluation of peacekeeping operations: termination phase, transmitted under cover of a note by the Secretary-General (E/AC.51/1999/5).

Discussion

535. The view was expressed that the report was comprehensive and forthright.

536. Satisfaction was expressed with the progress achieved by the Department of Peacekeeping Operations in the management of the termination phase and in implementing

most of the recommendations endorsed by the Committee three years previously, particularly those related to the lessons learned process. Further development of that process by the Department was encouraged. Particular concern was expressed at the non-implementation of recommendation 1, on the establishment of an archive of mission-specific standard operating procedures, and the lack of updating of the guideline standard operating procedures. Concern was expressed about the level of resources necessary to create the indexed archive of mission-specific standard operating procedures.

537. It was noted that the responsibility for further disseminating information from lessons learned efforts and ensuring that those lessons were internalized by the personnel who participated in future missions lay with the Department. The proposed merger of the Policy Analysis Unit and the Lessons Learned Unit, which had recently been submitted to the Fifth Committee, was noted. It was also noted that the experiences of the United Nations Protection Force and the United Nations Transitional Authority in Cambodia had been omitted from the process of preparing the lessons learned report on the United Nations Transitional Administration for Eastern Slavonia, Baranja and Western Sirmium.

538. Satisfaction was expressed at the increased collaboration between the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and the Department of Public Information regarding the public information component of peacekeeping activities, and the importance of enhancing public awareness of the activities of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations in the field was emphasized.

539. The view was expressed that, in the disposal of assets, further effort was required by the Department for the finalization of the assets inventory.

540. Concern was expressed about lack of resources, which had prevented the full implementation of a number of recommendations. Concern was also expressed about the fact that there was no information in the report on follow-up to the recommendations that had not been endorsed by the Committee but had been referred to other intergovernmental bodies, or on actions taken, as reflected in paragraph 2 of the report.

Conclusions and recommendations

541. The Committee noted that the Department of Peacekeeping Operations had substantially improved its management of the termination phase.

542. The Committee endorsed the conclusions of the triennial review.

Chapter IV

Coordination questions

A. Report of the Administrative Committee on Coordination

543. At its 10th and 11th meetings, on 11 June 1999, the Committee considered the annual overview report of the Administrative Committee on Coordination (ACC) for 1998 (E/1999/48). The representative of the Secretary-General introduced the report and responded to queries raised during the Committee's consideration of the report.

Discussion

544. It was noted that ACC is a critical body for the functioning of the United Nations system and that it had made progress in enhancing coordination within the system during the period under review. The efforts of the Secretary-General to reform ACC and its subsidiary machinery were appreciated. Concern, however, was expressed about proliferation of task forces, working groups, etc. It was explained that these are task and time bound, ending when the defined objective is achieved. It was suggested that Member States should be briefed after each ACC session. It was noted this was being done for the Economic and Social Council and it was indicated this could also be done for the Committee for Programme and Coordination. Reference was made to the opportunity for dialogue which was previously provided by the joint meetings of the Committee for Programme and Coordination and the Administrative Committee on Coordination which were discontinued in accordance with General Assembly resolution 50/227 of 24 May 1996.

545. A question was raised as to the impact of the appeals and statements issued by ACC. It was noted that these are usually of a nature that do not make measuring results easy or feasible. Insofar as members of ACC were concerned, they remain committed to implementing the decisions of ACC. It was up to the international community to respond to them as well. Efforts were, nevertheless, made to widely disseminate these statements, including bringing them to the attention of relevant intergovernmental bodies.

546. It was stated that ACC should make full use of information and communications technology. Information was provided on steps being taken so as to facilitate effective and timely communication among executive heads and among ACC subsidiary machinery. These include establishing an "extra-net", which will allow the United Nations system staff to communicate electronically, establishing an "Executive Information Network", a dedicated electronic communication for use by the executive heads, improving the ACC Web site, establishing a United Nations system-wide electronic telephone directory, which will also include information on an individual's assignment and areas of expertise, and establishing a "United Nations Consortium" to enable sharing of the information resources of the various United Nations libraries. Greater use is also to be made of teleconferencing.

547. It was noted that communication and dialogue between ACC and the Economic and Social Council have improved, but that there is still scope for further enhancement in order to achieve a dynamic interaction between the two bodies. It was stated that the Committee for Programme and Coordination wishes to be informed in greater detail as to how legislative mandates coming from the Council are implemented by the system, and also which of these mandates are found to be impossible to implement and why.

548. A question was raised as to the relationship between the United Nations executive committees and the ACC and its subsidiary machinery. The executive committees are internal to the United Nations itself and incorporate only the departments, funds and

programmes of the Organization. They complement the efforts of the Senior Management Group, chaired by the Secretary-General, to ensure coherence and synergies within the United Nations. ACC on the other hand brings together the specialized agencies, the Bretton Woods institutions, as well as the United Nations funds and programmes in order to promote greater cooperation and harmony system-wide.

549. Support was expressed for the priority attention given by ACC to Africa and for ACC's agreement that there should be no lessening of support for African development. Support was also expressed for the Secretary-General's report entitled "The Causes of Conflict and the Promotion of Durable Peace and Sustainable Development in Africa". It was also stressed that ACC should closely follow the ongoing initiatives to address the problems of Africa, such as the United Nations Special Initiative for Africa and the Tokyo International Conference on African Development.

550. Support was also expressed for the conclusions of ACC concerning poverty eradication. In a statement it released on this topic, ACC stressed that poverty eradication — a main underlying theme of recent global conferences — is a key international commitment and a central objective of the United Nations system. ACC's statement on poverty, along with a matrix to guide and facilitate field level coordination, was provided to the resident coordinators for use in the work of the country teams. In addition, the resident coordinators were requested to cite in their annual reports the accomplishments of the United Nations system in helping Governments and other organizations, including civil society, address poverty eradication.

551. The view was expressed that it is important for ACC to deal with the issue of globalization and that ACC should continue to monitor the impact of the financial crisis and other negative consequences of globalization. The follow-up to the ACC statement on globalization included providing guidelines for resident coordinators and a matrix of activities that could be carried out by the system at the field level. Information was also provided on the follow-up to ACC's designation of the United Nations Environment Programme as the coordinating body for the system's response to the forest fires in Indonesia.

552. The importance of follow-up to United Nations conferences and summits was discussed. It was indicated that ACC should continue to give priority to follow-up to the outcome of these conferences. It was further indicated that there must be adequate resources for financing follow-up actions.

553. Questions were raised about links between ACC and the World Bank and as to whether the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) and the World Bank's Comprehensive Development Framework are duplicative. It was noted that UNDAFs were originally designed for United Nations funds and programmes, but now involve the full participation of the agencies of the United Nations system as well as the World Bank (General Assembly resolution 53/192, paras. 17–22). UNDAFs provide a programming framework for United Nations system development assistance to countries based on national priorities expressed in national development plans and on country strategy notes. The formulation of an UNDAF is commonly preceded by a Common Country Assessment (CCA). UNDAFs and CCAs are prepared by United Nations country teams, led by resident coordinators, with full participation of the concerned Governments and full ownership of the recipient Governments of the finalized frameworks.

554. It was explained that the Comprehensive Development Frameworks proposed by the World Bank are still in an early stage of development and are intended to be broader in scope than UNDAFs. The Comprehensive Development Framework, as a programming instrument, would encompass all assistance needs of countries, from all potential sources, including

bilateral donors. The Comprehensive Development Framework preparation is to be led by the concerned programme country and United Nations system participation in their preparation is expected. Discussions at the senior level are being held between the United Nations system and the World Bank concerning the form of the United Nations system's participation in the Comprehensive Development Framework preparatory process. As to links between ACC and the World Bank, it was noted that the Bank is an active member of ACC, including in the work of its subsidiary machinery.

555. Support was expressed for ACC's having greater contact with civil society and the private sector, but doing so in a manner prescribed by the Charter of the United Nations.

556. It was noted that the strategic framework process is timely and deserves support. In this regard, a view was expressed concerning the need for expeditious development on the part of the United Nations system of approaches and programmes for reconstruction and rehabilitation of the infrastructure of Yugoslavia, which has been destroyed by military attacks. An observation was made concerning the significant economic losses of third States caused by the disruption of commercial navigation on the Danube river as a result of the destruction of the bridges.

557. In considering the report's treatment of Article 50 of the Charter, concerning the impact of sanctions on third-party States, a strong message was conveyed that it is time to move from words to action and to provide the necessary assistance to the affected countries. The important role of the Committee for Programme and Coordination in mobilizing and monitoring the economic assistance efforts by the international community at large, and by the United Nations system in particular, to States confronted with special economic problems referred to in Article 50 of the Charter, was emphasized. The question was also raised as to whether the report should cover this topic, as it is not dealt with by ACC itself. It was indicated that the report dealt with this subject at the request of the Committee for Programme and Coordination, which could decide on any future arrangement in that regard.

558. With respect to administrative questions, the importance of ensuring safety and security of United Nations staff was stressed and support given for ACC's attention to this issue. It was noted that a number of Member States have contributed to a fund for financing activities related to staff security. Regarding the review of the International Civil Service Commission, it was stated that the General Assembly has not yet acted on the ACC proposal and that, until such time, existing procedures should be followed.

559. ACC's work programme for 1999 was given consideration and received expressions of support.

Conclusions and recommendations

560. The Committee took note of the annual overview report of ACC and noted that the current report was an improvement over those of previous years and that it was more comprehensive, analytical and focused on specific issues. Nevertheless, the Committee recommended that the report be further improved, include more information concerning levels of aid flows and provide detail on follow-up actions taken on past ACC decisions.

561. The Committee indicated its desire that it be informed in greater detail as to how legislative mandates coming from the Economic and Social Council are implemented by the system and also which of these mandates have been found not possible to implement and why.

562. The Committee expressed its support for the priority attention given to Africa by ACC and for ACC's agreement that there should be no lessening of support for African development.

563. Support was also expressed for the conclusions of ACC concerning poverty eradication. The Committee also indicated that it is important for ACC to continue to deal with the issue of globalization and to continue to monitor the impact of the financial crisis and the other negative consequences of globalization.

564. The Committee recommended that ACC continue to give priority to follow-up on the outcomes of United Nations conferences and summits and it indicated that there must be adequate resources to finance follow-up actions.

565. The Committee took note of the overview report's treatment of Article 50 of the Charter concerning the impact of sanctions on third-party States and conveyed a strong message that it is time to move from words to action and to provide the necessary assistance to the affected countries. At the same time, the Committee noted that it needs to be kept informed on any activities and progress in the field.

566. Regarding administrative questions, the Committee expressed its strong support for the attention being given by ACC to ensuring safety and security of United Nations staff and encouraged universal ratification of the 1994 Convention on the Safety of United Nations and Associated Personnel and the Convention on the Privileges and Immunities of the United Nations.

567. The Committee recommended that it should be regularly briefed on the outcomes of ACC meetings.

568. The Committee requested that the next report of ACC include a part related to the implementation of the observations and recommendations of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions in its report A/52/7 (chapter II, part IV, para. IV.4).

B. United Nations System-wide Special Initiative for the Implementation of the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s

569. At its 8th and 9th meetings, on 10 June 1999, the Committee considered the progress report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of the United Nations System-wide Special Initiative for the Implementation of the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s (E/AC.51/1999/6).

Discussion

570. The overall reaction to the report, in terms of its content and analysis, was encouraging. The view was expressed that it addressed the critical priority areas of African development, including the two areas of regional cooperation and integration and economic diversification which were not covered in the previous year's report. It also dealt with the specific recommendations made by the Committee with regard to the need for better coordination. However, it was felt that the quality of the report could have been enhanced by including the lessons learned and the constraints faced in each of the priority areas.

571. The need was stressed for African countries to identify their development priorities and to be fully involved in the process of global partnership. In that regard, national ownership of the Special Initiative should be promoted. It was also stated that African

countries must define their own priorities and programmes and that African efforts at addressing their problems should be highlighted and supported by the international community. While the experiences of other developing countries were instructive, sharing and disseminating those experiences among African countries should be encouraged.

572. A view was expressed that the Special Initiative had the role of catalyst, generating new projects, many of which were under execution.

573. Concern was expressed that the number of countries targeted under the programme of the Special Initiative was limited. Emphasis was placed upon the need to increase the number of countries and the priority areas to be covered.

574. The view was also expressed that, at the outset, the Secretary-General's report should have shown the linkage between the Special Initiative and the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s, given the fact that the Special Initiative was an implementing arm of the New Agenda. Furthermore, the view was expressed that the report should have shown the link between the priority areas of the New Agenda and the recommendations contained in the Secretary-General's report to the Security Council on the causes of conflict and the promotion of durable peace and sustainable development in Africa (A/52/871), and in that regard it was stressed that issues of conflict resolution, good governance and development needed to be accorded great priority. The view was also expressed that future reports should explicitly highlight the congruence of the objectives of the United Nations System-wide Special Initiative for Africa with those of the Cairo Agenda for Action for relaunching Africa's economic and social development as well as the operational link between the Special Initiative and the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s. It was also noted that the functional linkage between the Special Initiative and organizations of the United Nations system should be examined so as to provide more convincing evidence of the value added of the Initiative.

575. As regards the priority area of health, it was felt that the focus on HIV/AIDS masked the adverse impact on the health of the African population of other diseases such as malaria and tuberculosis, which were claiming many more lives than the pandemic. The view was also expressed that African efforts at the local and national levels to address the problems of health needed to be highlighted.

576. Concern was expressed over the limited progress achieved in the area of poverty eradication in Africa. Since poverty eradication, an important objective of the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s, was critical for achieving development, it should have been the priority of the United Nations programmes in Africa, and poverty reduction the main performance indicator of progress achieved in the Special Initiative. Similarly, no tangible results had been achieved in food security. Enhanced implementation of those two areas was therefore required. It was also pointed out that much more needed to be done in the area of economic diversification.

577. Concern was also expressed regarding the lack of concrete actions in the priority areas under the Special Initiative, as the emphasis seemed to be on meetings, workshops and similar forums. Thus, more concrete actions were called for and in that regard it was felt that some of the recommendations of the Secretary-General's report on Africa could be used as a basis for defining those concrete activities.

578. The need was voiced for increased access to trade opportunities if Africa was not to be marginalized in the global economy. The view was expressed that, while African economies needed to be made competitive vis-à-vis other countries, increased access to the markets of developed countries and trade opportunities was equally important.

579. The importance of resource availability in implementing the priority areas of the Initiative was underscored. Concern was expressed that little progress had been made under the Initiative with regard to resource mobilization. That issue should receive further attention from the international community. It was noted with concern that the heavy debt burden of African countries was siphoning resources away from critical development activities. In that respect, it was proposed that the conditions for the countries to qualify for relief under the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) Debt Initiative should be relaxed to enable more countries to benefit from the Initiative. With respect to critical issues pertaining to African development, such as debt and trade, reference should be made to recent regional African and global conferences as well as the Ministerial Statement issued by the recently concluded Joint Conference of African Ministers of Finance and Ministers of Economic Development, as well as the Ministerial Communiqué of the High-level Segment of the Economic and Social Council on market access: developments since the Uruguay Round[6] and General Assembly resolution 53/174 of 15 December 1998 on commodities.

580. It was noted with satisfaction that the coordination between the United Nations and the Bretton Woods institutions had improved but it was also stressed that more needed to be done to increase the involvement of those institutions in the overall coordination of development assistance to Africa. Such comprehensive involvement required close consultation in the Administrative Committee on Coordination and the active participation of the leadership of the Bretton Woods institutions. The need to strengthen coordination and collaboration among bilateral, multilateral and regional and subregional initiatives was emphasized.

581. Concern was expressed about potential duplication owing to the existence of two secretariats within the United Nations system — the Office of the Special Coordinator for Africa and the Least Developed Countries and the secretariat of the Special Initiative. The Committee noted with appreciation the close collaboration between the Office of the Special Coordinator and the secretariat of the System-wide Special Initiative.

582. Nevertheless, it was noted with concern that some proposals on performance indicators contained in annex IV to the Secretary-General's report related to governance-included elements that had not been approved by the relevant intergovernmental bodies and that they did not address the African reality. The Committee also noted that the proposals on performance indicators related to economic diversification, regional cooperation, resource mobilization and poverty eradication did not include elements that could measure the concrete actions to be taken to improve the situation in Africa in the economic areas.

583. On performance indicators for monitoring progress in the implementation of the Special Initiative, it was felt that the matter should be addressed carefully and cautiously as it was a relatively new area and was still being considered in other forums. The view was expressed that the performance indicators should be further refined to match the configuration of all African countries, taking into consideration the need for flexibility and adaptation to the reality and specificity of each country.

584. The Committee noted that the proposals related to performance indicators requested by the Committee on the issue had not been approved by the General Assembly.

585. The view was expressed that partnership with Africa through South-South cooperation should be enhanced and that the United Nations should play an increased and supportive role in that respect. In particular, the importance of support to the South Centre was stressed.

586. With a view to the goal of making the Special Initiative fully operational before its mid-term review as well as the final review of the United Nations Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s, especially at the national level, the importance of

monitoring the implementation of the recommendations of the Committee was stressed. In that regard, the Committee welcomed the matrix contained in annex III to the report, which could be improved by adding a fourth column on action taken by the agencies.

Conclusions and recommendations

587. The Committee took note of the progress report of the Secretary-General and of the results achieved in the Special Initiative and commended the improvement in quality over the previous year's report. The Committee noted with concern the limited number of countries covered by the Initiative and called for greater coverage of countries. It noted and endorsed the elaboration of the two programmes on diversification and regional cooperation and integration by the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development.

588. The Committee noted the progress achieved in coordination at the country, subregional and regional levels and welcomed the establishment of the annual regional coordination meeting of organizations of the United Nations system working in the continent and the utilization of the Special Initiative as a coordinating mechanism. The Committee further noted with appreciation the active involvement of the Bretton Woods institutions in the implementation of the Special Initiative and the resulting enhanced coordination between the organizations of the United Nations and those institutions. The Committee took note of the innovative resource mobilization strategy outlined at the meeting jointly organized in October 1998 by the World Bank and the secretariat of the Special Initiative and formulated in a report to the Co-Chairs of the Administrative Committee on Coordination Steering Committee on the Special Initiative.

589. The Committee requested that a resource mobilization strategy together with the concrete action plan be submitted to the Committee for consideration at its fortieth session in 2000.

590. While welcoming the emphasis on improving Africa's trade competitiveness in the priority area of trade access and opportunities, the Committee requested that activities be also implemented on opportunities to access markets and that such activities be reflected in the next progress report.

591. The Committee noted the matrix prepared by the Secretariat in follow-up to and implementation of its recommendations and requested that such a matrix be improved by adding a fourth column indicating actions taken and submitted to it together with future progress reports.

592. The Committee took note with appreciation of the closer collaboration between the Office of the Special Coordinator for Africa and the Least Developed Countries, the Economic Commission for Africa and the secretariat of the Special Initiative and requested those entities to work closely on the harmonization of the various initiatives on Africa, especially on enhancing the linkages and common elements among the Special Initiative, the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s, the Cairo Agenda for Action for relaunching Africa's economic and social development, and the Tokyo Agenda for Action, on the one hand, and the other multilateral and bilateral initiatives on the other.

593. The Committee called upon the lead agencies of the various clusters of the Special Initiative to be represented at the highest appropriate level at its future meetings on the Special Initiative, in order to assist the Committee in its deliberations.

594. The Committee recommended the acceleration of the Special Initiative by the extending of support to as many countries or regions as possible that may require funding in those activities that have a direct impact at the field level.

595. The Committee requested that its comments be reported to the Economic and Social Council's coordination segment on Africa to be held at Geneva in July 1999.

596. The Committee requested that a progress report on the United Nations System-wide Special Initiative for the Implementation of the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s, including measures taken in response to the foregoing recommendations of the Committee, be submitted to it for consideration at its fortieth session in 2000.

Chapter V

Reports of the Joint Inspection Unit

More coherence for enhanced oversight in the United Nations system

597. At its 3rd and 4th meetings, on 9 June 1999, the Committee considered the report of the Joint Inspection Unit entitled "More coherence for enhanced oversight in the United Nations system" (A/53/171), the comments of the Administrative Committee on Coordination thereon (A/53/171/Add.1) and the related report of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (A/53/670). The report of the Joint Inspection Unit was introduced by John D. Fox, Inspector.

Discussion

598. Concern was expressed about the consideration by the Committee for Programme and Coordination of the report of the Joint Inspection Unit. The report had already been formally introduced in the Fifth Committee. Such duplication should have been avoided.

599. Appreciation was expressed for the report as a very readable, informative and timely document that was based on good analysis and contained useful reference information in its table and annex. In addressing an issue of great current interest, the document also was considered to be thought-provoking, as shown by the extensive debate in the Committee on it.

600. The view was also expressed that the report was very descriptive and added nothing substantial to the debate on the question. Moreover, the report was not action-oriented and had no practical impact.

601. It was also stated that an evaluation of the functioning of the oversight mechanisms could have been more useful to identify the specific problems and recommend concrete solutions to the current problems of oversight in the United Nations system, in particular how to avoid any politicization of oversight at the United Nations.

602. Concerning the conclusions of the report in its executive summary, the view was expressed that there was no over-reliance on oversight mechanisms and that it was the duty of those mechanisms to identify the shortcomings in the performance of the United Nations system organizations. The view was also expressed that there was no blurring of the classical roles of internal and external oversight. The distinction was still clear according to the statutes, functions, scope of mandate and reporting procedures of each of them.

603. Regret was expressed that the report referred to a symposium on oversight held in October 1997, which was attended by some Member States of a specific group that does not represent the universal composition of the United Nations membership and therefore could not be used to represent accurately the views of Member States of the United Nations. A question was raised as to why the report did not refer to the debate held on the matter by some legislative bodies such as the Fifth Committee.

604. Support was expressed for the concept of shared responsibility for oversight, on which the report is based. However, it was noted that the necessary sharing of responsibility for oversight among the oversight mechanisms, secretariats and Member States in no way dilutes the responsibility of external oversight mechanisms for the full and effective performance of their functions. It was noted that the notion of shared responsibility requires that external oversight mechanisms first assume their primary responsibility by supporting independently and effectively the legislative organs in their oversight responsibilities. The view was also

expressed that even though oversight cannot substitute for trust between Member States and the Secretariat, it is crucial that Member States be aware of cases of mismanagement.

605. The view was expressed that the report, while referencing the need to strengthen external oversight, put more stress on improving internal oversight. The view was expressed that emphasis on internal oversight reflected the current development of internal oversight mechanisms in the United Nations system. Interest was also expressed in a future Joint Inspection Unit report on the strengthening of external oversight.

606. Considerable discussion took place about whether or not Member States suffered from what was called "oversight indigestion" in the report. Use of the phrase in the report, in view of its having been drawn from a non-United Nations setting, was criticized. The view was expressed that Member States do suffer from being overwhelmed with oversight documents that arrive too late and are not coherently related to each other. The view also was expressed, that, if oversight indigestion existed at all, it was of a temporary nature and that it was better to be informed about problems in United Nations organizations by oversight documents rather than by newspapers. Contrary to the conclusion of the report, it was stated that there was no feeling of oversight indigestion. What was more needed was effective, action-oriented oversight instead of academic observations.

607. Regarding recommendation 1 on agreed plans for conducting internal oversight, the meaning of the word "plans" was clarified. As explained in the report of the Advisory Committee, rather than annual work plans, the word "plans" means proposals of the executive heads of each organization on the oversight structure to be established and the way to conduct and coordinate all its elements. Support was expressed for this recommendation, with the strong insistence, in accord with the report, that there was no expectation of the same model being applied to all organizations. It was stressed that the structures should be adapted to the specific needs and circumstances of each organization. Nevertheless, the view was expressed that each organization should be free to choose their internal oversight mechanism according to their needs, and, in this regard, any proposal to coordinate and strengthen their internal oversight mechanism should be approved by their legislative organs. There was a question as to why executive heads should have to submit plans for this purpose to legislative bodies for their approval, since such information is included in normal programme budget submissions. It was explained that the different oversight mechanisms in most United Nations organizations are fragmented and the purpose was to consolidate such plans into one document so that Member States could more easily consider the matter as a whole and so that such consideration could be more focused specifically on internal oversight itself than would be possible in acting on an overall programme budget.

608. It was observed that the comments of the Administrative Committee on Coordination about micromanagement by Member States (A/53/171, para. 2) had raised serious concern, and a clarification was sought. The point was made that Member States had a legitimate right and obligation regarding the oversight function of the Organization. Article 10 of the Charter, read in conjunction with Article 7, did not put any restriction on Member States to discuss any question or any matter within the scope of the Charter.

609. Regarding recommendation 2 on reporting on internal oversight activities, it was observed that it is for each legislative body to determine the reporting procedure for both external and internal oversight mechanisms. The view was expressed that a more common system-wide format for reporting could increase the costs and complexity of existing reporting arrangements, as observed by the Administrative Committee on Coordination. The view was also expressed that the issue of recommendations made by internal oversight bodies was not a problem, since, by definition, those bodies make recommendations to

executive heads and programme managers, not legislative organs. The view was also expressed that in the reporting procedures of internal oversight bodies, the legislative bodies of any organization should have a role in the consideration of their recommendations. Regarding the three separate elements of recommendation 2:

(a) *Recommendation 2 (a)*. Support for this recommendation was expressed. Nevertheless, the view was expressed that it was up to the deliberative organs themselves to determine what action should be taken on the recommendations of the internal oversight body. The view was also expressed that internal oversight bodies should not, in any case, question the decisions taken by legislative organs, which are reviewed through established mechanisms. The need to avoid additional costs and complexity, which was of concern to the Administrative Committee on Coordination (A/53/171/Add.1, para. 3) was also addressed;

(b) *Recommendation 2 (b)*. The view was expressed that, consistent with the point in the report of the Advisory Committee noted above, it was for legislative bodies to decide whether internal oversight reports should be submitted as documents of the executive heads or as documents that would not be subject to change by the executive heads. The view was also expressed that the internal oversight bodies were within the authority of executive heads and that they should not be considered as equal or parallel authorities. The view was also expressed that, while internal oversight reports should be made available to legislative organs as prepared by the internal oversight mechanisms, executive heads should take responsibility in the follow-up to their recommendations;

(c) *Recommendation 2 (c)*. The need for this subparagraph was questioned, but the view was expressed that such a procedure would facilitate the reporting process. It was noted that the priority of legislative bodies must be respected and the decision of an executive head regarding his/her need for legislative authorization to implement an internal oversight recommendation would be subject to approval by the appropriate legislative body. It was observed that the reports of internal oversight bodies should be submitted to the relevant legislative bodies for consideration and action and for any decision they may deem appropriate.

610. Regarding recommendation 3 on highlighting good practices, there was general support for the recommendation, with the observation that good practices for some organizations would not always be good practices for others. The view was also expressed that the recommendation was relevant.

611. Regarding recommendation 4 on Joint Inspection Unit analyses of consolidated annual summary reports on internal oversight activities, there was support for the concerns expressed in the comments of the Administrative Committee on Coordination and the report of the Advisory Committee about such analyses being just an added layer of reporting with questionable value. The question was also raised whether the Joint Inspection Unit could cope with this task in view of its lack of systematic reporting on reports of the Office of Internal Oversight Services. Nevertheless, the view was expressed that such analyses by the Joint Inspection Unit could provide helpful assistance to Member States in their making use of the annual internal oversight reports from all of the different organizations. It was pointed out that, rather than exhaustive and voluminous summaries of the internal oversight reports, the analyses would be the size of normal Joint Inspection Unit reports calling attention to system-wide problems and/or good practices that the Unit believes could be of interest to Member States. It also was noted that the recommendation called for issuing the analyses periodically rather than annually.

612. Regarding recommendation 5 on fostering a stronger professional oversight community, there was support for the recommendation, with the understanding that training was also to be included.

613. Regarding recommendation 6 on more dialogue among oversight partners, there was support for more dialogue, but concern was expressed about the nature of the dialogue and the need to assure its transparency. The view was also expressed that such arrangements were already in place in the United Nations system.

614. The view was expressed that there should have been a seventh recommendation regarding the need to assure monitoring and follow-up on oversight recommendations. It was pointed out that recommendation 2 called for annual reports on internal oversight activities that would include reference to the status of action taken on recommendations, but that this was an issue that could deserve a recommendation of its own. Related to this matter, the view was stated that one of the major problems for the Joint Inspection Unit was the absence of follow-up on its reports. It was noted that the Unit had included in its annual report two years ago[7] an annex entitled "Towards a more effective system of follow-up on reports of the Joint Inspection Unit" and that approval of that proposal was still awaited.

615. The view was also expressed that in the follow-up system of internal oversight bodies, those recommendations which could imply changes in legislative mandates should not be implemented without the prior approval of the pertinent legislative bodies.

616. In the context of the preliminary discussion on the reports of the Joint Inspection Unit, it was noted that at the current session the Committee was presented with only one report for its consideration owing to the lack of comments by the Administrative Committee on Coordination on other Joint Inspection Unit reports.

Conclusions and recommendations

617. The Committee noted the observations of the Administrative Committee on Coordination on micromanagement (A/53/171/Add.1, paras. 2 and 7) and emphasized the role of Member States under the Charter.

618. The Committee concluded that oversight should not be considered a panacea for making things right in the United Nations system.

619. On the recommendations contained in the report of the Joint Inspection Unit, the Committee reached the following conclusions:

(a) Recommendation 3. The Committee recommended approval of this recommendation, on the understanding that all good practices cannot be replicated throughout the United Nations system and that the respective legislative bodies should take decisions, as necessary, in this regard;

(b) Recommendation 5. The Committee recommended approval of this recommendation subject to the comments by the Administrative Committee on Coordination in paragraph 6 of its report (A/53/171/Add.1) regarding confidentiality of certain data and cost-effectiveness of some of the initiatives;

(c) Recommendation 6. The Committee recommended approval of this recommendation, on the understanding that the dialogue should be through relevant established forums.

620. The Committee recommends that the General Assembly request the Secretary-General to expedite obtaining the comments by the Administrative Committee on Coordination for due consideration of the reports of the Joint Inspection Unit by the Committee for Programme and Coordination.

Chapter VI

Improving the working methods and procedures of the Committee for Programme and Coordination within the framework of its mandate

621. The Committee considered agenda item 7, entitled "Improving the working methods and procedures of the Committee for Programme and Coordination within the framework of its mandate", and reviewed the implementation of the conclusions and recommendations agreed to by the Committee on the matter at its thirty-eighth session.

Documentation

622. It was noted that in order for the Committee to fulfil its mandate in a satisfactory manner, it required complete and timely submission of relevant documentation.

Time limit

623. The view was expressed that a time limit for delivery of statements should be established in a large debate on subjects such as the medium-term plan and the programme budget. In the same vein, it was pointed out that the lack or inaccuracy of responses to queries raised by delegations led to unnecessary and lengthy discussions and follow-up comments.

Conclusions and recommendations

624. The Committee affirmed the shared responsibility of the members, observers and the Secretariat in improving the working methods and procedures of the Committee for Programme and Coordination within the framework of its mandate.

625. The Committee reaffirmed that reports of the Secretary-General should conform to the mandates approved by relevant intergovernmental bodies, the Regulations and Rules Governing Programme Planning, the Programme Aspects of the Budget, the Monitoring of Implementation and the Methods of Evaluation, the terms of reference of the Committee and relevant General Assembly resolutions.

626. The Committee stressed that the Secretariat should submit the necessary documentation on time and in accordance with the six-week rule. Their format should be in accordance with General Assembly resolutions 52/214 B of 22 December 1997 and 53/208 B of 18 December 1998. In that connection, the Committee emphasized that the Secretariat must pay closer attention to the contents of the documents as well as to the quality of translation.

627. The Committee agreed that draft reports of the Committee prepared by the Secretariat must accurately reflect the opinions expressed during the discussion on specific matters. The tendency of delegations making proposals simply to balance views that they do not like should be discouraged. All draft reports should be provided to the Rapporteur and Coordinators before circulation so as to ensure that the reports accurately reflect the views expressed during the discussion.

628. The Committee agreed to concentrate on the conclusions and recommendations section of the draft report.

629. The Committee recognized that the discussion section does not represent a consensus view, and therefore negotiations on the discussion section should be avoided. In this regard, the Committee emphasized that no actions should be taken by the

Secretariat on matters reflected in the discussion section, nor should action be taken on recommendations not approved by the Economic and Social Council and/or the General Assembly.

630. The Committee noted the use of the passive voice in the discussion section and recommended that, if possible, the repetitive usage of the phrase "the views were expressed" should be avoided.

631. The Committee reiterated that in accordance with the rules of procedure of the Economic and Social Council, observers may participate in its deliberations on any matter of particular concern to them. The Committee reaffirmed the responsibility and privileges of its members in the decision-making process and the recommendations they adopt.

632. The Committee recognized the need to pay more in-depth attention to its coordinating role as the main subsidiary organ of the Economic and Social Council.

633. The Committee emphasized the need to maintain, to the extent possible, normal working hours.

634. The Committee, once again, emphasized that its role, in all aspects of its mandate, including its secretariat, should be strengthened in order to allow it to implement effectively the tasks assigned to it.

635. The Committee agreed to continue to implement its recommendations contained in paragraphs 362 to 369 of its report[5] and decided to continue consideration of this agenda item at its fortieth session.

Chapter VII

Consideration of the provisional agenda for the fortieth session of the Committee

636. In pursuance of paragraph 2 (e) of Economic and Social Council resolution 1979/41 of 10 May 1979, and paragraph 2 of General Assembly resolution 34/50 of 23 November 1979, the Committee shall submit to the Council and to the Assembly, for their review, the provisional agenda for its fortieth session, together with the required documentation. In accordance with paragraph 8 of the annex to Council resolution 2008 (LX) of 14 May 1976, the fortieth session of the Committee shall be of six weeks' duration.

637. At its 37th meeting, on 2 July 1999, the Committee considered the provisional agenda and the documentation for the fortieth session on the basis of a note by the Secretariat (E/AC.51/1999/L.5).

638. At the same meeting, the Committee decided to submit to the Economic and Social Council and the General Assembly, for their review, the following provisional agenda for its fortieth session:

1. Election of officers.
2. Adoption of the agenda and organization of work.
3. Programme questions:

    (a) Programme performance of the United Nations for the biennium 1998–1999;

    Documentation

    Report of the Secretary-General on the programme performance of the United Nations for the biennium 1998–1999

    Report of the Secretary-General on ways in which full implementation of mandated programmes could be ensured and better assessed in accordance with the provisions of section V, paragraph 18, of General Assembly resolution 53/207

    (b) Proposed medium-term plan for the period 2002–2005;

    Documentation

    Report of the Secretary-General on the proposed medium-term plan for the period 2002–2005

    (c) Outline of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2002–2003;

    Documentation

    Report of the Secretary-General on the proposed programme budget outline for the biennium 2002–2003

    (d) Evaluation.

    Documentation

    Note by the Secretary-General transmitting the report of the Office of Internal Oversight Services on the in-depth evaluation of global development trends, issues and policies, and global approaches to social and microeconomic issues and policies, and the corresponding subprogrammes in the regional commissions (programmes 7.3 and 7.4 of the medium-term plan) (A/52/16, para. 306)

Note by the Secretary-General transmitting the report of the Office of Internal Oversight Services on the in-depth evaluation of the advancement of women (A/52/16, para. 306)

Note by the Secretary-General transmitting the report of the Office of Internal Oversight Services on the triennial review of the implementation of recommendations made by the Committee for Programme and Coordination at its thirty-seventh session on the evaluation of the programme on statistics (A/52/16, para. 290)

Note by the Secretary-General transmitting the report of the Office of Internal Oversight Services on the triennial review of the implementation of recommendations made by the Committee for Programme and Coordination at its thirty-seventh session on the evaluation of the Department of Humanitarian Affairs (A/52/16, para. 295)

Report to the General Assembly, through the Committee for Programme and Coordination, on strengthening the role of evaluation findings in programme design, delivery and policy directives

4. Coordination questions:

(a) Report of the Administrative Committee on Coordination;

Documentation

Annual overview report of the Administrative Committee on Coordination for 1999

(b) United Nations Special Initiative for the Implementation of the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s;

Documentation

Progress report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations System-wide Special Initiative for the Implementation of the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s (E/AC.51/1999/6)

(c) Draft system-wide medium-term plan for the advancement of women for the period 2002–2005.

Documentation

Report of the Secretary-General in his capacity as Chairman of the Administrative Committee on Coordination (A/52/16, part one, para. 310 and Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/34)

5. Reports of the Joint Inspection Unit.

6. Improving the working methods and procedures of the Committee for Programme and Coordination within the framework of its mandate (see A/54/16, paras. 621–635).

7. Provisional agenda for the forty-first session.

8. Adoption of the report of the Committee on its fortieth session.

Notes

[1] *Official Records of the General Assembly, Fifty-third Session, Supplement No. 6* (A/53/6/Rev.1).

[2] A/54/6 (Sect. 8).

[3] *Official Records of the General Assembly, Forty-sixth Session, Supplement No. 16* (A/46/16).

[4] See A/50/647, annex II, resolution AHG/Res.236 (XXXI), annex.

[5] *Official Records of the General Assembly, Fifty-third Session, Supplement No. 16* (A/53/16).

[6] Ibid., *Supplement No. 3* (A/53/3), chap. IV.

[7] Ibid., *Fifty-second Session, Supplement No. 34* (A/52/34).

Annex I

Agenda for the thirty-ninth session of the Committee

1. Election of officers.
2. Adoption of the agenda and organization of work.
3. Review of the efficiency of the administrative and financial functioning of the United Nations.
4. Programme questions:
   - (a) Programme planning:
     - (i) Programme performance of the United Nations for the biennium 1996–1997;
     - (ii) Regulations and Rules Governing Programme Planning, the Programme Aspects of the Budget, the Monitoring of Implementation and the Methods of Evaluation;
     - (iii) Medium-term plan for the period 1998–2001;
   - (b) Proposed programme budget for the biennium 2000–2001;
   - (c) Evaluation.
5. Coordination questions:
   - (a) Report of the Administrative Committee on Coordination;
   - (b) United Nations System-wide Special Initiative for the Implementation of the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s.
6. Reports of the Joint Inspection Unit.
7. Improving the working methods and procedures of the Committee for Programme and Coordination within the framework of its mandate.
8. Provisional agenda for the fortieth session.
9. Adoption of the report of the Committee on its thirty-ninth session.

Annex II

List of documents before the Committee at its thirty-ninth session

A/53/171	Report of the Joint Inspection Unit entitled "More coherence for enhanced oversight in the United Nations system"
A/53/171/Add.1	Comments by the Administrative Committee on Coordination on the report of the Joint Inspection Unit on more coherence for enhanced oversight in the United Nations system
A/53/670	Report of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions on more coherence for enhanced oversight in the United Nations system
A/54/6 (in fascicle form)	Report of the Secretary-General on the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2000–2001
A/54/6 (Part one) (i)	Part one (i): Foreword and introduction
A/54/6 (Part one) (ii)	Part one (ii): Tables
A/54/6 (Part one) (annex)	Part one: Annex
A/54/6 (Sect. 1)	Overall policy-making, direction and coordination
A/54/6 (Sect. 2)	General Assembly affairs and conference services
A/54/6 (Sect. 3)	Political affairs
A/54/6 (Sect. 4 and Corr.1)	Disarmament
A/54/6 (Sect. 5)	Peacekeeping operations and special missions
A/54/6 (Sect. 6)	Peaceful uses of outer space
A/54/6 (Sect. 8)	Legal affairs
A/54/6 (Sect. 9 and Corr.1)	Economic and Social Affairs
A/54/6 (Sect. 10)	Africa: New Agenda for Development
A/54/6 (Sect. 11 A)	Trade and development
A/54/6 (Sect. 11 B)	International Trade Centre UNCTAD/WTO
A/54/6 (Sect. 12)	Environment
A/54/6 (Sect. 13)	Human settlements
A/54/6 (Sect. 14)	Crime prevention and criminal justice

A/54/6 (Sect. 15)	International drug control
A/54/6 (Sect. 16 and Corr.1)	Economic and social development in Africa
A/54/6 (Sect. 17 and Corr.1)	Economic and social development in Asia and the Pacific
A/54/6 (Sect. 18)	Economic development in Europe
A/54/6 (Sect. 19)	Economic and social development in Latin America and the Caribbean
A/54/6 (Sect. 20)	Economic and social development in Western Asia
A/54/6 (Sect. 21 and Corr.1)	Regular programme of technical cooperation
A/54/6 (Sect. 22)	Human rights
A/54/6 (Sect. 23)	Protection of and assistance to refugees
A/54/6 (Sect. 24 and Corr.1)	Palestine refugees
A/54/6 (Sect. 25)	Humanitarian assistance
A/54/6 (Sect. 26 and Corr.1)	Public Information
A/54/6 (Sect. 27)	Administrative services: general overview
A/54/6 (Sect. 27 A)	Office of the Under-Secretary-General for Management
A/54/6 (Sect. 27 B)	Office of Programme Planning, Budget and Accounts Division
A/54/6 (Sect. 27 C)	Office of Human Resources Management
A/54/6 (Sect. 27 D)	Office of Central Support Services
A/54/6 (Sect. 27 E)	Administration, Geneva
A/54/6 (Sect. 27 F)	Administration, Vienna
A/54/6 (Sect. 27 G)	Administration, Nairobi
A/54/6 (Sect. 28)	Internal oversight
A/54/6 (Sect. 29)	Jointly financed administrative activities
A/54/6 (Sect. 31)	Construction, alteration, improvement and major maintenance
A/54/6 (Sect. 33)	Development account
A/54/67	Note by the Secretary-General on the review of the efficiency of the administrative and financial functioning of the United Nations

A/54/89	Report of the Secretary-General on measures for sectoral, functional and regional bodies to review the proposed medium-term plan for the period 2000–2005
A/54/117	Report of the Secretary-General on ways in which the full implementation and the quality of mandated programmes and activities could be ensured and could be better assessed by and reported to Member States
A/54/125	Report of the Secretary-General on the revisions to the Regulations and Rules Governing Programme Planning, the Programme Aspects of the Budget, Monitoring of Implementation and the Methods of Evaluation
E/1999/48	Annual overview report of the Administrative Committee on Coordination for 1998
E/AC.51/1999/1 and Add.1	Annotated provisional agenda and proposed programme of work
E/AC.51/1999/2	Note by the Secretary-General transmitting the report of the Office of Internal Oversight Services on the in-depth evaluation of the disarmament programme
E/AC.51/1999/3 and Corr.1	Note by the Secretary-General transmitting the report of the Office of Internal Oversight Services on the in-depth evaluation of the electoral assistance programme
E/AC.51/1999/4	Note by the Secretary-General transmitting the report of the Office of Internal Oversight Services on the triennial review of the implementation of the recommendations made by the Committee for Programme and Coordination at its thirty-sixth session on the evaluation of the Department of Public Information

E/AC.51/1999/5	Note by the Secretary-General transmitting the report of the Office of Internal Oversight Services on the triennial review of the implementation of the recommendations made by the Committee for Programme and Coordination at its thirty-sixth session on the evaluation of peacekeeping operations: termination phase
E/AC.51/1999/6	Progress report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of the United Nations System-wide Special Initiative for the Implementation of the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s
E/AC.51/1999/7	Note by the Secretariat on the programme performance of the United Nations for the biennium 1996–1997
E/AC.51/1999/L.1/Rev.1 and Rev.2	Status of documentation for the thirty-ninth session
E/AC.51/1999/L.2/Rev.1	Programme of work for the thirty-ninth session
E/AC.51/1999/L.4	Note by the Secretariat on the current notional costs of documentation and utilization of interpretation services
E/AC.51/1999/L.5	Note by the Secretariat on the draft provisional agenda for the fortieth session
E/AC.51/1999/L.6 and Add.1–45	Draft report of the Committee on the work of its thirty-ninth session
E/AC.51/1999/INF/1	List of delegations
